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*From the Author*

# ESSAYS

OF A

BIRMINGHAM MANUFACTURER.

BY

WILLIAM LUCAS SARGANT,

Author of "Social Innovators,"  
"Apology for Sinking Funds,"  
&c., &c.

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## THE NEW ACADEMY.

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"Whoever observes attentively the genius of the English nation, will be struck with two facts—the sureness of its common sense and practical ability; its deficiency in general ideas and commanding intellect, as applied to theoretical questions. If we open an English book of history, jurisprudence, or any similar subject, we seldom find the real foundation, the ultimate reason of things. In all matters, and especially in politics, pure doctrine and philosophy—science properly so called—have prospered far more on the Continent than in England; they have at least soared higher, with greater vigour and boldness. Nor does it admit of doubt, that the different character of the development of the two civilizations have greatly contributed to this result."—GUIZOT. (1)

"There exists a prejudice, unhappily too general, that learning and ennui are nearly synonymous. This indeed, is a sort of commonplace. It is no doubt admitted that here and there you find men of so exceptional a temperament, that though learned they are still agreeable and lively: but that a book of erudition can be, I do not say amusing, but even readable, is assumed to be impossible outside a small circle of persons, who aspire to be grave."—REVUE DES DEUX MONDES. (2)

"It is seldom that men study for the mere pleasure of learning; they generally require some useful object for their exertions."—DICT. DE L' ÉCON. POL. (3)

"The power of reward is the last asylum in which arbitrary power has entrenched itself. In the infancy of society, punishments, pardons, and rewards, were lavished without stint and without fruit. Men have long felt the necessity of submitting punishment to rules. The utility of regulating the privilege of pardon will also be acknowledged: and the subject of rewards will follow. *If punishment must needs have an examination with judicial forms, why should not reward also have its procedure?*" —DUMONT. (4)

## Essay I.

### THE NEW ACADEMY.

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#### I.

**I**T is not a wholesome practice to be constantly dwelling on the greatness of our country; just as it would not have been a wholesome practice for Madame Recamier, the handsomest woman of her time, to stand gazing at her image in a mirror. Fourth of July orations are pernicious to the Americans, as leading them to undervalue "effete" Europeans in comparison with themselves.

It is not the usual fault of English writers to utter fulsome praises of their country; but in the midst of the extravagant philippics which some of them do utter against it, it is well that we should be sometimes reminded of our real greatness. Tried by an ideal standard, England is indeed defective: tried by the standard of experience she is indeed great.

As the object of this Essay is to suggest a certain



remedy, I must needs first point out the disease requiring it: I am unwilling to do this without first showing that I do not undervalue what is excellent among us: I will therefore quote the opinions of distinguished writers among our old rivals the French; and I will content myself with tacitly assenting to their statements.

This proceeding will help forward the argumentation I have in hand: for if our grandeur is such as to command the admiration of the citizens of that great continental power, it behoves us the more to labour after uniformity of excellence: and if we find that in material prosperity we are preëminent among European nations; if we find that in the difficult art of government we far surpass all our neighbours, while in bravery and skill both afloat and ashore we stand at least in the first class; then it is the more humiliating for us to have to confess that our intellectual progress has lagged far behind our material and social and political progress.

Let us see then what is said about us by MM. Lamartine, Dupont White, and Michel Chevalier: that is by the poet-orator, the philosophical writer, and the St. Simonian political economist: by three men of various and independent schools.

“First look at England, the narrowest in its insular boundary, but the most extensive, not to say the most universal, of all the powers (if we except China) that have ever appeared on the globe. Whatever antipathy, not without jealousy, a Frenchman may feel towards England, he cannot be a man, if as a man he does not glory in the force of refinement, of wealth, of commerce, of intelligence, of



maritime power, of the army and the navy, capable of creating, from this handful of Anglo-Saxons, not indeed the masters, but at least the models of the civilized world.”—LAMARTINE.<sup>(4A)</sup>

“Great Britain is the most civilized country in the world, and still more the one in which civilization has made the greatest advances of late. In no other has commerce doubled itself in twelve years (1842 to 1854); and that amidst a development of political rights, of productions of the mind, of works of philanthropy, nowhere surpassed.”—DUPONT WHITE.<sup>(5)</sup>

“In England proper, that is excluding Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, the same surface yields, with the same number of labourers, three or four times as much as the European continent. But the soil is very narrow: this same England, the only part of the United Kingdom which is both fertile and well cultivated, is only a fourth of France: 13 million hectares against 53. It is unable to feed its inhabitants; not producing corn enough to supply them. On the other hand, Great Britain can supply manufactures enough to satisfy all other countries, and a marine large enough to carry on the world's commerce. In cotton fabrics alone, it exports a length equal to 120 times the radius of the terrestrial globe, and in cotton yarn enough to make a quantity of cloth equal to the half of this extraordinary length. The cotton factories of continental Europe might be destroyed by the fire of heaven: but at the end of a year or two the consumers would scarcely feel the difference; for England would be able to clothe their persons and adorn their houses. A single

English ironmaster would, if he were pressed, undertake to supply France with half the iron its thirty-five millions of inhabitants require. The mercantile marine of the Continent might sink to-morrow: but England would soon be able to effect its exchanges; for it is above all a commercial nation, a nation of shopkeepers, as Napoleon said,<sup>(6)</sup> attaching to the word a signification I should be far from assigning to it; for the great Emperor forgot, when uttering this epithet as an overwhelming reproach, that commerce is the bond of nations, one of the most active agents of civilization, a pledge of peace among men.”—MICHEL CHEVALIER.<sup>(7)</sup>

Many of us are a little weary of hearing of our commercial greatness, of our wide-spread colonies, and even of our commercial and naval predominance: we ask with some anxiety whether our spirit, our bravery, our heroism, have been dulled by our prosperity. I believe that on that point we may for the present be at ease; though it would be far otherwise if we were to listen to those insidious epicureans, who whisper that we had better withdraw within our own boundaries, and leave the colonies to shift for themselves: that it is no affair of ours if continental oppressors annex Belgium and Holland, overrun Switzerland, crush Denmark, and partition Europe among a few great powers.

Some satirical writers contend that our personal bravery is gone. They see examples of poltroonery; a crowd looking on while a man nearly kills his wife, gaping spectators idly gazing while a boy is drowning: they conclude that we are a nation of cowards.<sup>(8)</sup> Do they shut their eyes to the daily

heroism around them? We learn that in the case of the late deplorable murders by Greek banditti, Mr. Vyner and his companions exhibited perfect coolness and fortitude. Mr. Vyner when yielding to Lord Muncaster the opportunity of going to Athens to negotiate the ransom, probably did not anticipate the cruel death that awaited him, but a coward would have anticipated it.

What again, will our detractors say to the following lines describing the doings of ordinary men? <sup>(9)</sup>

“Whatever may have been the proximate cause or causes which led to the catastrophe off the Needles on the 17th instant, in which the *Normandy* was lost, it is impossible not to be struck by the heroism and chivalrous feeling displayed on board the hapless ship. Captain Harvey, cool and self-possessed, stands by his ship to the last, issuing orders for the preservation of his passengers and crew, till the vessel, with her plates torn off, and the sea rushing in at fifty apertures, sinks. Ockleford, the chief mate, goes down with the ship, exhibiting the same calmness and fidelity to his duty. Goodwin thrusts a fireman into the boat in his stead, and says ‘Mind and come back for me.’ And young Kintock, wrapping his sister in his cloak, placing her in the boat, and delivering his little Skye terrier to her care, refuses to take his place beside her till the rest of the women remaining on the wreck are saved.”

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—

Then shriek’d the timid, and stood still the brave—  
Then some leap’d overboard with dreadful yell,  
As eager to anticipate their grave;



And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,  
And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,  
Like one who grapples with his enemy,  
And strives to strangle him before he die.

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And first one universal shriek there rush'd,  
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash  
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,  
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash  
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,  
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

I am persuaded that among those who read the few prose lines of the *Pall Mall*, many had their eyes dimmed; and that some of the more generous sort, felt for a moment, at least, that they would have willingly shared the fate of the drowned men: that since they must needs die some time, they would be glad to die thus grandly. In truth the spirit and generosity of the nation have not departed.

## II.

GREAT BRITAIN then, has not fallen from her high place. If she does not occupy the grand position of 1712 or of 1815, when she headed the European coalitions by which the ambition of France was curbed, yet is she still the envy of her neighbours for her comparative prosperity, her unrivalled empire, and her political progress.

Whether she is, as M. Dupont White has said,

the most civilized country of the world, must be determined by the meaning given to the word civilized. If by civilization is meant advancement, material, moral, intellectual, and æsthetic, we must confess that in one or more branches we are equalled or surpassed by other nations. We do not pretend to be ahead of France in matters of taste, in the sense of the beautiful; nor to be ahead of Germany in the highest intellectual pursuits: as to moral excellence, that is a matter scarcely fit for dispute, so wide is the field. Perhaps M. Dupont White, if he accepted my definition, would say that under moral excellence we must include the art of government; and that our incontestable superiority in this art, far overbalances any backwardness in the less important matters of taste and of the highest intellectual productions.

But however this may be, there remains the far more important question, whether we are to sit down resigned to inferiority in anything. It is not pretended that our race is incapable of rising to the highest imagination or the highest intellect: it is admitted that in poetry, in natural science, in philosophy, some of the greatest works of the world are the productions of Englishmen.

At present our superiority is material and moral: but the having attained such greatness, is the very reason for our striving to equal it in other ways. A comparatively ill governed nation may be great in philosophy, as we have seen in the case of Germany during a century. But we should scarcely recommend governmental efforts for the promotion of high education, to nations otherwise backward:

to Greece, which shares its administration with brigands: to Roumania, where Jew-hunting is a favourite national pastime: to Spain, where the discovery of a fit king is as tedious as the passing of an English reform-bill: or even to Italy, where ill-soldered provinces, lately independent kingdoms, are saturated with discontent; and disordered finances cause oppressive taxation, and threaten national bankruptcy.

Our administration is regular and honest: our religious *tolerance* is carrying us beyond our former *toleration* to equality of all opinions, and I hope to a wide church-comprehension: our dynasty, which reigns but does not govern, is tolerably secure on its throne, and illustrates the maxim, that the less is the royal power the longer it will be retained: our provinces, with the unhappy exception of Ireland, form a homogeneous country: our national revenue is constantly growing and our taxes are as regularly diminishing; while we want only an imitation of Holland and of the United States in discharging our national debt, to place us at the head of financial prosperity. Now is the time for us to inquire what can be done to bring us to the level of German intellect, or if possible to overtop it.

But is it true that we are so much behind our neighbours, or so inferior in the highest mental pursuits? Do we even share the tendency of modern society, to give a decided predominance to material advancement, while neglecting the other branches of investigation?

“As the most general of the impulses of modern civilization, we must note that which leads every



community like every individual, to an augmentation of well-being. This indeed, is not altogether new; and since men have given up acorns for food and bark for clothing, they have yielded to the desire of rendering life less harsh, easier and more secure; but in this journey towards well-being there are many stages of immobility or apathy. It is during the last three or four hundred years that the movement has become rapid, continuous, general; but never has the progress been so marked as during the present century. Never has there been so distinct a consciousness of this effort, now become deliberate rather than instinctive, towards the amelioration of our earthly condition. Men treat it as a law, a duty, an honour; and superior minds limit their ambition to procuring for us some additional satisfactions. Seconded, and as it were ennobled by the progress of science, which in obedience to Bacon is more than ever devoted to utility, the pursuit of material well-being is systematically proclaimed to be the work and glory of the age. Happily, body and soul are so strictly united, that mind gains something even by mechanical progress; and certainly we cannot pretend that an activity which has produced among other things, steam-vessels, railroads, the electric telegraph, has entirely failed to promote the intellectual and moral interests of universal society. While man's knowledge spreads over the globe with infinite rapidity, civilization advances.

“But this love, or rather this passion for well-being, which is so natural, may when encouraged and overexcited by social progress, become ex-

clusive, and occupy the place of other desires of a higher order.”<sup>(10)</sup>

When M. Charles de Rémusat wrote this passage in 1866, he was intent on the dangers of his own country: his mind was racked by the consciousness of the political apathy into which France had fallen under the Second Empire. Our dangers are different. Must we not confess that desires of a higher order, desires of intellectual progress, have been benumbed, paralysed even, by this passion for well-being; by our proud recollection of our astonishing progress in science and art during a hundred years? I fear that the following passage is no satire, but a melancholy truth.

“Civilization and freedom are liable to many diseases and many dangers. A nation which is truly self-governing and constitutional, which has achieved greatness and consolidated its independence, which is boiling over with activity and wealth, which stands in the van of civilization, and dreams of yet further and higher pre-eminence in the race of progress, has outlived the more common and obvious perils which beset national life, but has others of a subtler and more recondite character, though quite as fatal, still around it and before it. It has in future to beware of internal maladies rather than of foreign foes; and it is precisely these against which it is least likely to be on its guard.

“There are two especial ones which need to be signalized at present, because they are peculiarly incident to that stage of civilization which we have now reached, and to that tone of thought and feeling which is spreading among our public men. The

first is the disposition to undervalue noble causes and high aims, and to overvalue the social and material sacrifices entailed by embracing them and striving for them.”<sup>(11)</sup>

I find the same regrets and fears expressed by writers of very different classes: as for instance by one in the *Economist*, a journal devoted principally to commercial interests, though indeed, it is edited and often written by men of various attainments. In an article of 1864, the writer discusses the characteristics of statesmen; and quoting from Mr. Massey, shows how it was that Addington, a dull man, a “forcible feeble,” as Canning I think called him, managed for a time to fill the place of the able and stately Pitt. The wits and the fine gentlemen might laugh; but the squires and baronets relished a man like themselves, after having been for twenty years oppressed by genius and grandeur. “A kindred feeling pervaded the bulk of the middle classes. The natural state of public opinion in this country is dislike of change. Hence, a *demand for mediocrity*, equal, but not superior, to the ordinary administration of affairs. Men of parts and education in vain contend against this prejudice, by argument, invective, and ridicule in every form.” Our present Premier is then commented on.

“If speaking badly and speaking little are necessary qualifications for a leader of the House, Mr. Gladstone will never possess them. But though we acknowledge the force of mediocrity, though we are anxious at its tyranny and feel its power, we hope that a different fate is in store for us. To us—to



us above all other generations of Englishmen, it will repay a hard struggle—it is worth a vast price to be governed by a man of genius, by a man who can ennoble as well as rule, elevate as well as legislate. We are sure to be comfortable; we are sure to make money; but we are sure of little else. Day by day, it is more and more difficult to impress men with high things. Men move in masses for common objects, but those objects are material and ordinary. Nothing arrests the attention of busy men but Parliament; no literature, no art penetrates deep into eager busy life.”<sup>(12)</sup>

At an earlier date, we find Dr. Arnold complaining that Englishmen showed no serious interest in any topics but politics and religion.<sup>(13)</sup> And is it not so? What is the *beau idéal* of a middle-class man? He must have what the French call bourgeois morals: he must be temperate, chaste, kindly, industrious, prudent, reasonably liberal, a church or chapel goer, able in action, modest in talk; all the better if he is wealthy; a reader of Mudie’s sort, not given to speculations on the destiny of man, not a “scribbler in the newspapers;” a man of moderate aims, and with no qualifications which overshadow his neighbours.

I find De Tocqueville quoted as giving a still more unfavourable view of modern tendencies.

“If I inquire what passion is most natural to men who are at once stimulated and circumscribed by the mediocrity of their fortune, I can discover none more peculiarly appropriate to them than this love of physical prosperity. The passion for physical comforts is essentially a passion of the middle

classes; with those passions it grows and spreads, and along with them it becomes predominant. From them it mounts into the higher orders of society, and descends into the mass of the people.

“I never met in America with any citizen so poor as not to cast a glance of hope and longing towards the enjoyments of the rich, or whose imagination did not indulge itself by anticipation in those good things which fate still obstinately withheld from him.

“On the other hand, I never perceived amongst the wealthier inhabitants of the United States, that proud contempt of the indulgences of riches, which is sometimes to be met with even in the most opulent and dissolute aristocracies. . . . .

“The love of physical comfort is become the predominant taste of the (American) nation; the great current of men’s passions runs in that channel, and sweeps everything along in its course.”<sup>(14)</sup>

I doubt however, whether De Tocqueville rightly interpreted the phenomena he found in America. It is true that there is in that country a great desire of rising in fortune; that a clerk for example, does not sit down resigned for life to his position, but is always striving to become a principal. But I cannot reconcile the facts of the last ten years with the proposition, that desire for physical satisfaction is become the predominant passion of the nation. Men bent above all on the enjoyment of bodily comforts and pleasures, shrink with an Epicurean or Sybarite loathing, from war, drilling, scanty fare, open-air bivouacs, fighting, wounds, battle-fields, and hospitals. Yet what nation was ever found more willing to affront all these evils, through five campaigns?

It cannot be disputed that the overpowering desire of the Americans is that for national greatness, and that they are willing to make any sacrifices whatever which are found necessary to maintain the unity of their country.

Since the war, they have shown equal public spirit in a way less heroic but more conclusive. On the conclusion of peace, they found themselves burdened with a large national debt, not much more indeed than half of ours in 1815, though with an annual charge nearly as great as ours is at present. It was expected that they would say, in the spirit of Europeans under similar circumstances:—we have incurred this outlay for the permanent advantage of the nation; we leave to our sons an undivided heritage, greater than the European world ever enjoyed; we have got rid of the black curse of our country, and all citizens are now free and equal: if these benefits were confined to the present generation, then we should be bound to pay off the whole debt during the next twenty or thirty years; but as our posterity will share the benefits for hundreds of years, it is fair that they should contribute to the expense, and all the more because a doubled or quadrupled population will scarcely feel the charges which would be to us painfully heavy: we are no more bound to pay the whole cost, than a father is bound to pay out of his income the purchase money of an estate which he bequeaths to his son, or than the Belgian Government is bound to pay out of taxes the cost of constructing railways which it leaves to future generations. A people bent above all things on material enjoyments, would certainly have adopted



this reasoning made ready to their tongues by the most respectable European nations. But they have put it aside; and in their passion for American greatness have resolved to show how superior their nation is to the old races of Europe. They are raising a vast amount of taxes for the express purpose of paying off their debt; and men now of middle age will not die contented, unless they first see the Federal Government do once more what they have done before on a far smaller scale; discharge every claim and say proudly that they have not a creditor left. To gratify this desire they submit to taxation on income and taxation on consumption; to hindrances of business which lessen their chances of rising in wealth; to interferences with ship-building, which as they believe, are transferring their maritime commerce to their old rivals, the British.

But whether M. de Tocqueville was right or wrong; whether love of physical comfort, or desire of rising, or a passion for national greatness, is the predominant force in the American mind; one thing is certain, that a love of high education, an addiction to divine philosophy, a reverence for earnest and profound students, are not predominant in the United States. We learn from Mr. Grattan, in his *Civilized America*, that however much the Americans may admire and feast English authors who come among them, they are far from reverencing authors of native growth.

“Any one at all known in the world of letters, is sure of being lionized more or less in America. The public mind has a feverish thirst after knowledge in all shapes; and is intensely inquisitive as to the

personal appearance and habits of foreign authors. The crowds by which they are assailed, the invitations they receive, the entreaties to sit gratuitously for pictures and busts, the request for their autographs, and all the other acts of homage paid to notoriety, are by no means so complimentary as they seem to be. All this is very much more for the gratification of personal or local motives than out of regard to the individual. Each city in the Union has a pride in vying with the others in a reputation for hospitality to strangers, and in apparent admiration for talent. That these are but spurious pretences is proved by the general neglect of their native writers and scientific men. Dr. Channing, a prophet in our country, was but a pamphleteer in his own. Beyond a very small circle he was neither read nor talked of in Boston. Bancroft, the historian, is, on account of his political tendencies, even more than his shifting and frivolous character, shunned as a black sheep, against whom the white sheep of the opposite party are afraid to rub. Prescott, a writer far beyond the common run of his compatriots, an amiable man, and half blind, receives no popular marks of consideration. I might swell out the list of estimable and talented individuals, male and female, whose productions are constantly before the public, who are lauded in the newspapers and reviews far beyond their merits, but who are kept in a social position far below them; who are never asked to dinner, or *soirée* or ball; who are in fact utterly unknown, in the very places of which their names form the chief ornaments.”<sup>(15)</sup>

Such are the sentiments of the English race in

the United States: what are their sentiments at home? Our emigrants and descendants in the west, may perhaps serve as a mirror in which we may see our own image; pale it may be and slightly distorted, but still our image.

We find thoughtful Englishmen, themselves engaged in the affairs of life, and successfully striving to pursue their career, yet denouncing the excessive devotion of their countrymen to external advantages. Mr. Danson, a great authority on marine insurance, and himself daily occupied with the largest affairs of that sort, yet finds time to note what is going on around him.

“The most widely-accepted standard of ability, has reference, very naturally, to success in doing that which the leading occupants of the locality are here for the express purpose of doing—making money. Hence the special pride of towns, and of most people brought up in large industrial towns, is the display of wealth; their special humiliation is the inability to display it. Practically, our best-recognized virtues are pecuniary: as the punctual payment of his bills by the merchant; and the punctual rendering of his accounts by the agent. And our temptations, and our vices, are the same.”<sup>(16)</sup>

Mr. Thomas Hare in his well known work on Representation, justly denounces the prevailing worship of wealth.

“In a time when every effort is devoted to the acquisition of material riches, nothing is without its worth that confers extrinsic dignity or power. We are too prosaic to clothe



‘The olive wreath, the ivied wand,  
The sword in myrtles drest,’

with the symbolic value given to them by a more imaginative people in an earlier age; but we have not yet lost the estimation of what is great, and no means should be neglected which our institutions can offer of giving prominence to true worth, and impressing upon it the seal of the general approbation. That virtue is its own reward is for the individual a sublime truth, but for society it would be a niggard maxim. We cannot afford to part even with the faint and reflected gleams of human glory. Divinely taught wherein true heroism consists, we may restore again our long-forgotten theories of hero-worship, and find something better and nobler than an universal idolatry of money.”<sup>(17)</sup>

The Christian Socialists of twenty years ago, followed the bent of their noble minds, in uttering similar denunciations.

“Beef and pudding, turtle and champagne, a chaise and four, constitute the *summum bonum* of earthly felicity.

“Society in the feverish excitement that accompanies the thirst for gain, has regulated those objects for which wealth is to be pursued; it has pursued the means till the pursuit has become an absorbing passion, and the end to which the means should have been consecrated have become totally forgotten or neglected.

“It is this worship of outward things, which constitutes the gross, the prevailing superstition of the present day. It pervades all classes, all stations of society, &c.”<sup>(18)</sup>

I entirely agree with the writers of these censures : I detest as much as they do the incessant pursuit of business, the ostentatious display of wealth, the addiction to bodily enjoyments. But just as I have pointed out in the case of America, that its late history has shown the existence of a great patriotism, mastering the love of material indulgences, and causing submission to a burdensome taxation and an immeasurable sacrifice of life, if only the unity of the republic might be preserved, and the pecuniary reputation of the nation might be placed beyond question ; so I must point out in the case of England, that there is behind the pursuit of wealth another principle, good and even great in itself, and only blameable when it assumes a bad direction.

As a young man, I heard a physician say with much emphasis :—I would give my right arm to be a baronet. Having since witnessed the ambition and the resolute character of the speaker, I am nearly convinced that he was capable of the sacrifice. To a closet philosopher, few things could be more absurd than such mutilation for such an object. Give up a necessary limb for a perfectly needless decoration ! daily comfort for the pleasures of precedence and self-importance !

I am persuaded that the philosopher here sees only half the truth. The physician did not say that he would give his right arm to find himself entitled, as Sir William Hamilton found himself entitled, to a baronetcy which had lain in abeyance : what he desired was to be *created* a baronet : his ambition was to have such success in his profession as to earn the title. Even this might be unphilosophical ; but it

was far different from desiring mere social importance and right to precedence. It was ambition: the last infirmity of noble minds: an infirmity it may be, but an infirmity nearly approaching to strength.

The same principle I believe, is at the bottom of much conduct which looks weak and contemptible. A trader who has struggled upwards through difficulties, has a visible contentment in paying freely and promptly for all his purchases. The pleasure is a reasonable one: for to have a balance at one's bankers is in every condition of life an acknowledged source of security and satisfaction. To exhibit the pleasure is too much like purse-pride. Yet the feeling is mostly a rejoicing in success: it is not the feeling of the idle man who has succeeded to a large fortune. The trader says: I was poor; my capital was narrow; when I reckoned up my liabilities I wondered whether I should regularly discharge them; I felt that at certain periods, the failure of a particular house, or an unexpected commercial panic, would be my ruin. At present I am safe, because by industry and prudence I have worked my way up to comparative wealth. Thus the man rejoices in his success, and he is set down, justly perhaps, as purse-proud.

The same principle explains the apparent inconsistency of the Americans. M. de Tocqueville found them revelling in the enjoyment of physical comforts, or persistently envying those who enjoyed them. Yet when there breaks out a civil war which threatens the unity of their republic, they cast aside their base luxuries, they throng as volunteers to the Federal army, they bear hardships, wounds, and imminent



death; thousands who fall are succeeded by other thousands ready to fall too, and by mere force of numbers perpetually succeeding each other, they exhaust and ruin their enemy. Sybarites, Epicureans, they certainly were not. Grant that during peace it was not the superfluities in themselves which delighted them, but the superfluities regarded as a proof of success: then we understand how it was that for the sake of a greater and nobler success, the success in arms of their country, they divested themselves of their worldly enjoyments, and substituted patriotism for the desire of self. If this be so, could we not in times of peace and prosperity, divert this ambition, this love of success, into noble channels?

## III.

WHATEVER may be thought of the purse-pride or sensuality of the Anglo-Saxon race on either side of the Atlantic, it cannot be disputed that the reading on both sides is of a very superficial kind: that while amusing works are bought and read by thousands, grave and philosophical works are bought by hundreds and read only by scores. The condemnation of such marked preference for trifling and slight books, is nothing new. Plutarch thus opens his biography of Pericles.

“When Cæsar happened to see some strangers at Rome carrying young dogs and monkeys in their arms, and kindly caressing them, he asked, *Whether the women in their country ever bore children*; thus reproving with a proper severity those who lavish upon brutes that natural tenderness which is due

only to mankind. In the same manner we must condemn those who employ that curiosity and love of knowledge which nature has implanted in the human soul, upon low and worthless objects, while they neglect such as are excellent and useful.”<sup>(19)</sup>

It is impossible to deny that Plutarch’s censure is applicable to us. On every side we find the same complaint. See what Mrs. Austin says in the Preface to *Goethe and his Contemporaries*.

“On the one hand there has sprung up an impatience of all purely didactic works. It seems to be generally admitted that nobody now reads the great teachers of philosophy or morals. On the other, as people are unwilling to relinquish the appearance of learning, they require of writers of fiction to weave into their works such shreds of information as may suffice to keep up the agreeable illusion of the acquisition of knowledge. Children are trained in this confusion of ideas. Labour, the high duty and condition of life; and Art, its purifier, consoler, and charm, are both debased; the one is regarded as an enemy to be eluded, the other as useless, trifling, if not pernicious, in itself, but conveniently lending itself to the cheat. It is true that a work of Art may be made to inculcate a *moral* (as it is vulgarly called), or to teach a scientific truth—just as the Apollo Belvedere might serve as a tailor’s block—but are these aims of Art?”<sup>(20)</sup>

In *Macmillan’s Magazine* I find Mr. Palgrave making a similar complaint.

“‘Some books,’ said one of the greatest human authorities, ‘are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.’ Amongst

our many facilities and gains in this matter, there is reason to fear that Lord Bacon's first class not only passes the others (as perhaps it always must) numerically, but threatens more or less to absorb them. There seems no reason to think the froth of this day frothier than of old, and I am very grateful for novels and any good easy reading; it is not in the much extended attention such books now receive that the danger lies. One should differ from an authority so high as Mr. J. S. Mill with a rare hesitation; yet it does not seem to me that it is in a marked degree the mere number of new books, or the over-influence of advertisements, which renders good books scarce and good readers almost scarcer. Genius and Industry will not naturally heed the crowd in the market, nor is the difference between their works and the wares of the crowd less than at any former period. The root of the wrong appears to be, that people, unless profession or scientific interest influences them, go to books for something almost similar to what they find in social conversation. Reading tends to become another kind of gossip. Everything is to be read, and everything only once; a book is no more a treasure to be kept, and studied, and known by heart, as the truly charming phrase has it, if deserving that intimacy. People expect no longer an art in writing—a genuine vocation in the author for his work, a real accuracy, a clear condensation of fact or fancy, a language suitable to the thought, and thoughts worthy of choice language. Almost all but first-rate writers (and this majority includes many who were once first-rate) meet the fashion; their works are only to



pass over drawing room tables for the season, far indeed from that 'possession for ever' which one of the books most justly so described was named by its author. The "Run and Read Library" only too accurately fits the popular feeling. It is here that the multitude of books tells injuriously. Really, the more books, the better possible selection for the readers; but each fills so little time in an age when every one reads, that it is natural to turn to the next on the table. I may notice that this summary process, this inability to read even novels more than once, leads to a truly mean and miserable false judgment on many books once justly studied and enjoyed. Byron, it appears, is too shallow, Scott too popular of old, Wordsworth too dull for the Athenian of the moment. And yet any one of these volumes, to those who read in a more purpose-like and higher spirit, will give far truer pleasure than libraries only 'tasted.' We read at once too much and too little. *Multa, non multum.*"<sup>(21)</sup>

A writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* puts the case strongly.

"It appears to be only a question of time that 'general knowledge' should as its final triumph produce individual imbecility. We have probably lost ground since Smollett's day, yet even he wrote, 'By our present mode of education we are forcibly warped from the bias of nature, until even our thinking faculty is diverted into an unnatural channel. We are changed into creatures of art and affectation; our perception is absurd, our senses perverted; our minds lose their force and flavour, till the soul sinks in a kind of idiotism, and is

diverted by toys and baubles, enlivened by a quick succession of trivial objects, that glisten, glance, and dance before the eye, like an infant kept awake and inspirited by the sound of a rattle.' What would this keen observer have thought of one of our 'well-informed' railway travellers who had freshly absorbed, let us say the Christmas magazines, half a dozen newspapers, and a selection of 'handy books' as his week's literature? In our epoch of cheap and sensational publications these would seem to meet Smollett's description of the toys and baubles that divert and increase our 'kind of idiotism.' We do not mean to lecture on the enervating effects of modern reading, destructive as most of it is to personal thought and judgment; but we have lately come across a fresh proof of our increasing imbecility that is worth notice if only as a straw that shows the direction of our 'progress.' '' (22)

It might be found however, that a nation while thus absorbing rivers of diluted thought, still possessed a class which nourished itself on speculations drawn from the stronger springs of learning and reflection. Thus it is we are told in Germany; and the statement is doubly interesting to us, because the zealots of education would have us believe that German instruction during the last half century, has raised the nation to a satisfactory and a high level of intelligence; that because most of the boys and girls are taught to read and write, therefore the work of Education is complete. Let us see what is said by Mr. Buckle: an author certainly not prejudiced against German thoughts.

"There is no nation in Europe in which we find

so wide an interval between the highest minds and the lowest minds. The German philosophers possess a learning and a reach of thought, which places them at the head of the civilized world. The German people are more superstitious, more prejudiced, and, notwithstanding the care which government takes of their education, more really ignorant, and more unfit to guide themselves, than are the inhabitants either of France or England. . . . Their authors address themselves, not to their country, but to each other. They are sure of a select and learned audience, and they use what, in reality, is a learned language: they turn their mother-tongue into a dialect, eloquent indeed, and very powerful; but so difficult, so subtle, and so full of complicated inversions, that to their own lower classes it is utterly incomprehensible. . . . As a matter of course, all this has widened the original breach, and increased the distance which separates the great German thinkers from that dull and plodding class, which, though it lies immediately beneath them, still remains uninfluenced by their knowledge, and uncheered by the glow and fire of their genius.”<sup>(23)</sup>

In two notes, Mr. Buckle pursues this topic. He first censures Mr. Kay, who, he says, in his *SOCIAL CONDITION AND EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE*, “over-rates, like most literary men, the advantages of literary acquirements, and under-rates that education of the faculties, which neither books nor schools can impart to a people who are debarred from the exercise of civil and political rights.” He then quotes the following passage from Mr. Laing, whom he calls “the ablest traveller who has published observations on European Society.”

“German authors, both the philosophic and the poetic, address themselves to a public, far more intellectual, and more highly cultivated than our reading public. . . . In our literature, the most obscure and abstruse of metaphysical or philosophical writers, take the public mind in a far lower state, simply cognizant of the meaning of language, and possessed of the ordinary reasoning powers. . . . The social influence of German literature is, consequently, confined within a narrow circle. It has no influence on the minds of the lower, or even of the middle classes in active life, who have not the opportunity or leisure to screw their faculties up to the pitch-note of their great writers. The reading public must devote much time to acquire the knowledge, tone of feeling, and of imagination, necessary to follow the writing public. The social economist finds accordingly in Germany, the most extraordinary dulness, inertness of mind, and ignorance, below a certain level, with the most extraordinary intellectual development, learning, and genius, at or above it.”

Is this distinction true of Great Britain? I think not, and certainly not in the same degree. Ordinary readers are not so dull, inert, and stupid, as the same class in Germany: the philosophical class, I fear, scarcely exists, or consists only of a few individuals here and there. See what was written on that point in 1845, in the *Edinburgh Review*.

“In this particular, the difference between the English and the continental mind forces itself upon us in every province of their respective literatures. Certain conceptions of history considered as a whole,



some notions of the progressive unfolding of the capabilities of humanity—of a tendency of man and society towards some distant result—of a *distinction*, as it were, of humanity—pervade, in its whole content, the popular literature of France. Every newspaper, every literary review or magazine, bears witness of such notions. They are always turning up accidentally, when the writer is ostensibly engaged with something else; or showing themselves as a background behind the opinions which he is immediately maintaining. Where the writer's mind is not of a high order, these notions are crude and vague; but they are evidentiary of a tone of thought which has prevailed so long among the superior intellects, as to have spread from them to others, and become the general property of the nation. Nor is this true only of France, and of the nations of Southern Europe which take their tone from France; but almost equally, though under somewhat different forms, of the Germanic nations."

"It was Lessing by whom the course of history was styled *the education of the human race*. Among the earliest of those by whom the succession of historical events was conceived as a subject of science, were Herder and Kant. The latest school of German metaphysicians, the Hegelians, are well known to treat of it as a science which might be constructed *à priori*. And as on other subjects, so on this, the general literature of Germany borrows both its ideas and its tone from the schools of the highest philosophy. We need hardly say that in our own country nothing of all this is true. The speculations of our thinkers, and the commonplaces of our mere

writers and talkers, are of quite another description.” (24)

Some little experience of my own confirms these opinions of the writer. About fifteen years ago, I wrote by the advice of a friend, to a London publisher distinguished for the solidity and gravity of the books he issued: I asked whether he was disposed to treat for a manuscript on Political Economy; and I received an entirely discouraging reply. This reply was altogether independent of the value of the work, which the publisher had not even looked at. A few years later, corresponding with a second well known publisher, who had agreed to share with me the risk and profit of another book, I was warned, as a matter of business, that I must put nothing in it which would give readers “the trouble of thinking.” Both these traders had had their wits sharpened by experience: one of them had found that there was no demand for new publications on Political Economy; the other had found that for a book to be successful, it must spare its readers the trouble of thinking.

We all know how popular is any sneer at what Carlyle has nicknamed the dismal science: how delighted the world is to excuse its own ignorance by laughing at those who have brains and industry to understand the subject; at those who persist in the pursuit of a science which however disliked by the frivolous, must be the guide to a great part of legislation. In this respect we are inferior to France: for though we have at last adopted in practice the principles of Adam Smith, we take these upon trust without making an effort to under-

stand them. We have indeed, a Statistical Society and a *Statistical Journal* which supply many of the materials wanted: we have a *Weekly Economist*, a paper of much ability: but we have no periodical like the French *Journal des Économistes*, for the discussion of principles and for the information of thinkers who desire to know what is being written in other countries.

We are quite inferior to France in our application to the Science of Political Economy: yet France itself has advanced but a little. Here is what M. Michel Chevalier says:

“We know that France is of all the countries of Europe, or of Christendom, that in which political economy is the least taught. There are but two professorships: the one public, that of the College of France, and the other restricted to a special class of functionaries attached to the School of the Board of Works. Everywhere else, whether in Europe or America, each university has at least one chair of political economy; this will be found equally in Russia and in England, in Prussia and in Spain. The little kingdom of Portugal supports three professors of political economy. In France, instead of extending, we seem to be curtailing this useful branch of instruction. The chair of industrial economy, which was filled with such success by M. Blanqui, at the *Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers*, and which, as its title indicates, was devoted to but one branch of political economy, has been suppressed since the death of that brilliant professor. Another chair has been founded in its place, but it has been by an accident no doubt, filled by a person whose

chief claim to public attention consists in the propensity he has shown to throw insults on political economy and those who study it.”<sup>(25)</sup>

Judged by the number of professorships then, Great Britain was at that time far superior to France. But let us look at results. A dozen or a score of young men, attend the course of lectures at Cambridge or Oxford for one season: they attend because they must go to one professor or another, and they select this particular one for some slight reason; because perhaps he has the reputation for good nature, and for therefore easily granting certificates of proficiency. How many real students are produced by such a course?

Take a severer test. France constantly produces new books on political economy: England scarcely any. The French books are noticed and read. Now look at the fate of an actual book in England. Mr. H. D. Macleod, in 1858, published *The Elements of Political Economy*. I do not rate very high the peculiar views he put forth: but the question is whether they were of such value, and so expounded, as to be worthy of acceptance or of refutation. That they were so is easily proved, by the emphatic testimony of an eminent foreign author, the same M. Michel Chevalier whom I have already cited.

“The earlier of the two works of Mr. Macleod, as to which I desire to offer some observations, ought not to be judged by its title. This title, in fact, might seem to indicate that the work is an elementary one, intended to give a summary of political economy to amateurs with little time at their disposal. Mr. Macleod’s object, on the contrary,



is to lay solid foundations of the science, by passing through the crucible of a severe criticism, the opinions heretofore admitted by the authorities, and the definitions they laid down. A writer renders a great service to a science, in fixing its dictionary, and in defining with clearness and exactness its fundamental ideas. Such is the task to which Mr. Macleod has brought inexhaustible patience and the learning of a Benedictine. To justify his undertaking, which in truth required no defence, he quotes from Aristotle and Cicero, passages in which these two great authors expressed the importance they attached to just definitions. In his extreme anxiety for good definitions, he may have sometimes run into subtleties; but this is a reproach that he need not regret, for it is the natural consequence of his undertaking and in some degree the condition of his success.”<sup>(26)</sup>

As to Mr. Macleod’s opinion about paper currency, M. Chevalier says:

“This truth, which, even in our days, is not sufficiently recognized by the public, has been expounded by Mr. Macleod in many happy modes, and he is worthy of congratulation. It is one of his best arms for destroying the theory of Law and that of Mirabeau.”

“He says and repeats over and over again that *Credit is Capital*. The impression left on my mind after reading Mr. Macleod is, I say without hesitation, that he is nearer the truth than his adversaries, however eminent they may be.”

After showing what is intended by the phrase, *Credit is Capital*: that this does not mean that credit and capital are the same thing, but rather that

credit produces the effects of capital; M. Chevalier adds :

“Mr. Macleod’s theory may begin with exciting astonishment, mingled with incredulity; but after reflection, such sentiments will be succeeded by approbation.”

Such are the deliberate opinions of a distinguished French writer, as to Mr. Macleod’s *Elements of Political Economy*. Let us now see what is said by another French writer, as to the *Dictionary of Political Economy*, which Mr. Macleod began to publish in 1860. In the *Économiste Français* for 25th July, 1863, there is this passage.

“The name of Mr. Henry Dunning Macleod was, ten years ago, unknown to France and the rest of the Continent; it does not appear in the (French) *Dictionnaire de l’Économie Politique*, which M. Guillaumin published in 1834. . . . At present, Mr. Macleod occupies, in the opinion of learned Europe, *one of the highest ranks, if not perhaps the first*, at the head of Economical Schools.” . .

“Our hesitation” (in assenting to his peculiar doctrines) is justified by many personal objections; but one cannot help being attracted by so much independence of mind, by such stores of learning, by such luminous clearness of exposition, by an originality and a liveliness in discussion, which exhibit a soul wholly engaged with a generous ardour in the renovation of a science.”

This does not exhaust the French encomiums: one remains, the best of all; the encomium of deeds not words. M. Henri Richelot, after reading Mr. Macleod, was so impressed with his views, that

he wrote and published an octavo volume: *Une Révolution en Économie Politique, Exposé des Doctrines de M. Macleod*. The work opens thus.

“The object of the present exposition is neither more nor less than a revolution in the science of political economy. This revolution has been effected by an Englishman, whose name is Henry Dunning Macleod.

“Some perhaps, will cry out on hearing this: ‘Here is a strange assertion. Is not political economy a complete and perfect science? This science is entire in the books of eminent masters; there is not an iota to be added; all that is now wanted is to spread and propagate it; who can pretend to re-construct it?’

“Nevertheless, a man of singular sagacity does make such a claim, and in this audacious undertaking he has met with complete success.”

My acquaintance with German literature is, unhappily, small, and only at second-hand. I am told however, that in the *International Review*, published at Vienna, there was at the beginning of 1867, an article on “Political Economy in the Old World and the New;” in which Mr. Macleod’s claims to notice were clearly set forth, and a protest was made against the present practice of recognizing Mr. Mill as the only representative of thought on the subject.

I hope I have now proved by the testimony of foreigners, that Mr. Macleod is an author whose views on Political Economy, whether they are correct or not, are unquestionably worthy of attention, and fit to be either accepted or refuted. I have done this in no spirit of partisanship: for I have

never had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Macleod, nor am I sufficiently well acquainted with his works to be deeply convinced of their excellence.

I have brought the case forward for a particular purpose; that of showing how an Englishman of originality, of learning, of industry, may be highly appreciated in France and Germany, and yet utterly neglected at home. It may be true that the English professorships are more numerous than the French: that there exist political economy clubs in London and Oxford: that a considerable number of youths attend lectures on the subject, for the purpose of getting a professor's certificate; and that many other youths read Mr. Mill's work, as a preparation for competitive examinations. This only proves the existence of a good deal of elementary knowledge; and is quite compatible with the want of a class of men who pursue political economy as geologists, chemists, physiologists, botanists, pursue their respective subjects: greedy of novelties, ready to listen to everyone who has any information to give, and equally ready to refute any theories which seem crude or ill supported. If Mr. Macleod had given to any of the natural sciences a tenth part of the industry and ability he has given to political economy, he would have been talked of, reviewed, approved or condemned: he would not have to wait for French or German approbation before he attracted the attention of his own countrymen.

Now let us see what attention he has attracted: how much he has been talked of and reviewed. Before he was declared original in France and Germany, England never acknowledged him at all:



no weekly paper, not even the *Economist*, no monthly periodical, not even *Fraser* or *Macmillan*, no quarterly periodical, not even the *Edinburgh* or the *North British*, devoted an article to his publications.

Even since he has become famous in France and Germany, he has fared none the better at home. M. Michel Chevalier, the *Économiste Français*, M. H. Richelot, the *German International*, have praised him in vain: the English public care nothing for his opinions or his paradoxes: he is doomed to suffer that treatment, the most cruel for an author; neglect.

It is very well to declare that "Dr. Johnson was quite right in saying that no man was ever written down except by himself:" <sup>(26A)</sup> there is a worse fate than that of being written down: Mr. Macleod's fate, ruin by neglect.

Am I not justified in saying that the English knowledge of political economy is *superficial*? That seems to me its peculiar characteristic: superficiality. Certain doctrines, and the phrases expressing them, have become part of the furniture of all our minds: every journalist talks of them as familiarly as maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs: the division of labours, the law of supply and demand, the doctrine of *laissez-faire* and free trade, the Malthusian principles of population, the West-Ricardo theory of rent, are the stock in trade of ordinary men. But below these commonplaces, nothing. The truths are taken as accepted beyond dispute; just as the narratives of *Rollin's Ancient History*, and *Hume's History of England*, and *Robertson's History of America*, were accepted as indisputable in the last century.

Great Britain produced the greatest writer in the world on political economy: she early got rid of serfdom; of hindrances to trade between county and county, and even between England and Scotland; of the oppressions of trade guilds: half a century ago she began to feel her way towards freedom of foreign commerce, and nearly a quarter of a century ago she finally adopted it: therefore we regard ourselves as a nation of political economists. I do not deny that the principles of the science have been adopted into our practice: that notwithstanding the sneers of sciologists the science has entered deeply into our political life: but I do say that our knowledge of the subject is ludicrously superficial. In the United States, education generally is wide spread; there exists a large aggregate of information: but any depth of knowledge is very rare: few books of learning or profound science bear an American name on their title page. Our knowledge of political economy is wide spread; we have a large aggregate of information about it, but our original books upon it are few, and those few are neglected. We are as superficial in this respect as the Americans are generally.

Is there no possible remedy? I think there is: a possible and a simple remedy.

But before I proceed to say what this is, I must recall the fact that political economy is not the only important study that is neglected. It may easily be shown that mental philosophy fares no better.

Such entire neglect as Mr. Macleod has experienced, is indeed, uncommon; and suggests the

existence of a personal antipathy to him, on the part of reviewers and editors: a suggestion which I make, not as an excuse for those gentlemen, but only as a possible explanation of the fact. Other writers however, certainly not suffering from such antipathy, have yet received scant acknowledgement of their merits. I find the following notice in 1859.

“The first instalment of Sir William Hamilton’s Lectures is now positively about to be published. The Metaphysical Lectures, consisting of two portly octavo volumes, are, we learn, all but ready, and will be in the hands of many an eager reader within a week. It is interesting to contrast the impatience with which the posthumous publication of his Lectures has been waited for with the almost total want of recognition which his contributions in the *Edinburgh Review* received from his countrymen thirty years ago. They were reprinted and eagerly discussed on the Continent, and the writer spoken of as the foremost thinker in Europe by Cousin and others, long before his name had excited any interest in his own or the sister country. Now country reading clubs must have the work, and Mudie, the prince of modern librarians, will announce it alongside of the popular novel, and count his readers of the work in hundreds; while the daily press will dissect the volumes and all questions within the boundaries of metaphysics in a week after their publication.”<sup>(27)</sup>

Now the name of Sir William Hamilton was long known, as that of a profoundly learned man and distinguished professor: there were living, hundreds of men who had attended his remarkable lectures:

the readers of the *Edinburgh* were familiar with his articles. A popular writer he certainly was not; nor can any metaphysician or moral philosopher be at once profound and popular. But to a student he was readable enough: his edition of Reid which I studied some twenty years ago, though I could not call it light reading, seemed to me to present no unnecessary difficulty. See however, how he was neglected.

After this, Mr. Herbert Spencer may bear with some equanimity the treatment he has experienced, although it is in one sense an aggravation, that another English-speaking people has recognized his merits.

Mr. Spencer, finding the sale of his works insufficient to justify their publication, proposed to resort to the old mode of subscription, as a protection from loss: but this scheme succeeded so ill that he feared he should have to cease from printing; and some Americans proposed to step in and help him. An English journal made the following comments.

“The *New York Tribune* has some severe comments upon the announcement of the suspension of the publication of Mr. Herbert Spencer’s philosophical works in this country as in contrast with the influence they are exerting in America. ‘The *Principles of Education*,’ it says, ‘has passed through many editions, and has exerted a powerful influence upon educational management in families and schools. And while,’ it continues, ‘the growth of enlightened opinion and humane feeling among ourselves brought on a conflict of ideas which resulted in a mighty



clash of the elements of barbarism and civilization, and while England was jeering at the mortal struggle as a carnival of brutality, the foul and bloody sequel of the great democratic experiment, we published some 17,000 copies of the various works of this profound writer, and accorded him the full pecuniary rights of an American author. If England,' it adds, 'chooses to neglect him, America will vindicate the liberality of the age, and see to it that he is put beyond embarrassment in the further execution of his great philosophic plan.' It is not often that American reproaches against us are so just."<sup>(28)</sup>

Mr. G. H. Lewes also, while editor of the *Fortnightly*, gave some information on this subject.

"Money is not everything; at least not to every man; otherwise Philosophy would never hold up her head again, for Philosophy will bring none. The man who has an urgent impulse to instruct his fellows on the great problems, must not expect to be paid for doing so; *he must pay for the privilege*, and after paying for it, *he may find the privilege waste paper*. This leads us to announce a fact which will have much interest for many of our readers, though unhappily it in no wise reverses what has just been said, the fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer will *not* be forced to discontinue the publication of his series of works. America generously threatened to prevent such an interruption should England permit it. Englishmen would not have permitted it; but even their aid will be dispensed with. An accession of income has enabled Mr. Spencer to *bear the loss himself*, and he will continue

to bear it; though it may be reasonably hoped that sufficient attention may have been called to his publications to render that loss in future but a slight one. The time will come when all men who pretend to any serious culture will be ashamed not to have Mr. Spencer's books upon their shelves.<sup>(29)</sup>

Mr. Spencer, by the consent of all, belongs to the first class of living writers on mental philosophy: in the opinion of many even this praise is too faint: and such a man cannot expect to sell a sufficient number of his volumes to pay the expense of printing and paper!

I will give the case of another author of a rank different from those I have mentioned. Sir George Cornewall Lewis was before his death a statesman of the highest order; a man regarded as very likely to become Premier: he was at one time Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*: his depth of learning was unquestioned. Before he had attained to these honours, but many years after he had become an author and had been praised by the periodicals, he published an *Essay on the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion*; a topic which would appear interesting to a large circle outside of students proper, and one not requiring like mental philosophy, or perhaps political economy, a knowledge of technicalities. Such an essay might fairly be expected to be generally read: we should have had no reason for astonishment if a hundred copies had been sold for every thousand sold of Macaulay's history. Here is what the author says on that point.

"I thought I had mentioned to you some time

ago that I was writing on the subject of Authority. My book has been favourably reviewed in the *Examiner*, *Athenæum*, and some other newspapers; and nearly 230 copies have been sold, which, as the subject is not a very attractive one, and the mode of treatment is not intended to be popular, is quite as much as I could hope for!" (30)

The author must have defrayed the greater part of the expenses of publication, out of his own pocket: he must have paid for the privilege of instructing his countrymen.

A German example will show us that we do not stand alone in our negligence. The name of Schopenhauer is little known in England; and his characteristics probably unfit him to become popular here. A Berkleian in metaphysics, a pessimist in moral philosophy, a woman-hater in social science, he offers little attraction to British common sense.

"The whole destiny of his doctrine is amazing; especially the long obscurity which enveloped it. Schopenhauer is not one of those philosophers whose language or ideas are repulsive to an earnest reader: it must be admitted that no author could be more perspicuous, and that he is even an agreeable writer, which can be said of few Germans, and particularly among the philosophers. Nor has he anything in common with those philosophers, little attractive to reflective minds, who skim with levity over the surface of questions: he delves deep; his thought touches no subject without opening, as with a steel ploughshare, a visible and notable furrow. If the ill fortune of Schopenhauer and his doctrine is not easily explained, the unexpected resurrection of a

buried system, the popularity which it rapidly obtained, the brilliancy which drew all eyes to it, were still more suprising. The doctrine in fact, contradicted the most marked tastes of the day. History had the first predilection of the century, and Schopenhauer, like Descartes, held history in contempt. Politics are a fever which no one escapes, and he made light of politics: not content with violently attacking the demagogues, or rather the politicians of whatever party, and reformers of every denomination, he went so far as to declare (in Germany be it remembered) that patriotism is the most stupid of passions and the passion of fools. Towards 1850, at a time when so many deceptions oppressed men's minds, and cruel catastrophes filled good men with a melancholy too well founded, did he produce any ideas calculated to raise their courage? On the contrary, he declared that it was the height of folly to wish for consolation; that wisdom consisted in appreciating the absurdity of life, the emptiness of all hopes, the inexorable fatality of ill bound up with the existence of man. Are we listening to a modern? Not so, but to a Buddhist, in whose eyes repose consists of absolute detachment; who points out as the beatitude to which we should aspire, and as the recompense reserved for saints, the annihilation of the will. Such a system has nothing seductive; it is fitter to scandalize than to charm a generation proud of its civilization and puffed up with its powers."<sup>(31)</sup>

Two things are wonderful: that Schopenhauer should have attained such wide popularity; that he should so long have suffered under neglect. As to the neglect I find the following remarks.



“One word on the singular fate of this doctrine. We know how philosophy fared in France after 1848; into what utter discredit it had fallen among the public and in the schools, from which it is now slowly recovering. In Germany at the same time, there was the same catastrophe. One doctrine had been almost sovereign there: it had permeated religion and politics, and was mixed up with all the anxieties of a nation. Suddenly a veil was torn, and for the first time men judged it freely. Not merely was its empire lost, but reverence was gone too; and this sudden fall of Hegelianism drew down ruin on all philosophy. . . . It was at this moment that the name of Schopenhauer emerged into light. One fine day, Germany learnt with surprise that *for thirty years* she had possessed without knowing it a great prose writer and a profound thinker: public opinion, sick of all speculation, gathered round him. Histories of philosophy, filled with the names of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, were ignorant of this man's name: but he quickly made up for lost time; that justice which he had long awaited with proud confidence was complete in a few years; and whilst his neglected rivals retained with difficulty a handful of disciples, he died in 1860, almost in glory.”<sup>(32)</sup>

Thirty years of neglect, and ten years of reputation!

Very recently, an entertaining example has come before us. In the year 1857, Lord Dufferin published *Letters from High Latitudes*, and the volume was very popular. His lordship has since become well known as an excellent Irish landlord, and a man of much public spirit. During the late

discussions on the Irish Land Question, he published a small book on that question. Now it might have been expected that his reputation as an author and a public man, would have secured a considerable sale for this tract; and the more because of the decided popularity of his Letters; for it was said by Mr. Dickens, the most popular author of his day, that it was not his best work which sold best, but the one which followed his best, and got the advantage of its popularity.

Lord Dufferin has told us in a singularly good humoured way, how far his reasonable expectations were realized.

“The interests of poor authors and poor printers are not lost sight of amid the endless variety of benevolent enterprises which are this month being eloquently advocated in the metropolis. Lord Dufferin presided this week at the anniversary of the Royal Literary Fund, and was supported by a brilliant gathering, composed of peers, baronets, members of Parliament, and Indian princes. Lord Dufferin justified his title to occupy a representative position on the occasion, since no one had a better claim to rank as an unremunerated author. Should any incredulous auditor inquire what that claim was, he would refer him to his publisher, where at this moment he would find stored up in redundant profusion the whole edition of a laborious treatise, not a single copy of which, notwithstanding the most eloquent and expensive advertisements, had been purchased by an undiscerning public.”<sup>(33)</sup>

Political economy, whether theoretical, as in the case of Mr. Macleod, or practical, as in the case of

Lord Dufferin; mental philosophy, as in the cases of Sir William Hamilton and Mr. Herbert Spencer; the philosophy of authority, as in the case of Sir G. C. Lewis; are all of them neglected. Such topics, or some of them, are read in text-books for examinations; and the few authors of such books sell one edition after another to successive generations of students: but text books are only repertories of established truths; original thought is out of place in them, since authority cannot require learners to master opinions which have not earned the approbation of competent judges, after time for reflection. Examinations therefore, supply no readers of original works; and as most of our limited class of readers are candidates for examination, the original writers in question find no readers.

I know that the contrary notion is commonly entertained: that the public adopts the more agreeable opinion of Macaulay; who said that a patron was formerly necessary to save an author from starvation, but that an author's best patron now is his publisher. Such was his experience: but such has not been the experience of Macleod, Hamilton, Spencer, Cornewall Lewis, and Lord Dufferin. Macaulay was above all things popular: he had early formed an opinion that history might be made highly attractive, and he made it highly attractive. To do this however, he sacrificed every pretension to the discussion of principles, and thus laid himself open to the censure of M. De Tocqueville; that his history was as interesting as a romance, and as wanting in philosophy.

The same optimist view of authorship has been adopted by Mr. William Chambers, one of the

publishers who have industriously flourished by literature.

“One of the standing reproaches of past literature—a thing mourned over, and even joked over—was the wretched remuneration of authors. To the credit of our day, *all lamentations* and witticisms on this score, *have vanished* into the realms of tradition. The central part of the nineteenth century, through the liberal encouragement offered by a popular widespread literature, has become *the paradise of authorcraft*. A narration of the sums now given by publishers of magazines and the lesser periodicals for attractive fictions would excite the most lively surprise—a very considerably higher price being now, in innumerable cases, offered by the proprietor of a penny, three-half-penny, or two-penny weekly sheet for the use of a story to be drawn out in portions over half a year, than was paid to Gibbon for his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, to Blair for his celestial *Sermons*, or to Samuel Johnson for his laborious *Dictionary*.”<sup>(34)</sup>

Mr. Chambers, at the moment of writing this, had in his mind, only that kind of literature by which he had himself prospered: not fictions only, but all sorts of light papers which give the readers no “trouble of thinking.” Such literature is well rewarded. But I have shown that the contrary is true of the higher kinds of writing; that for this there is not demand enough to pay the expenses of publication. Our reading now is wide-spread but thin; superficial authors therefore flourish, while grave and original thinkers are neglected.

As I have mentioned history, I will notice two



other authors on that subject: Hallam and Helps. Mr. Hallam's works have gone through many editions; and as he did not certainly sacrifice substance to popularity of style, he may seem to contradict my opinion. But I reply that Mr. Hallam's histories are used as text-books, and I have conceded before that even a grave work, if adopted as a text-book, will have a large circulation.

Mr. Helps's case is a very different one. I find that his *Spanish Conquests in America* is read by comparatively few; and as I see that Mr. Helps is publishing detached parts of it under other names, I conclude that its reception has not been favourable. Yet it is an admirable and most instructive history; and the excellence of Mr. Helps's style was established by previous works, such as *Friends in Council*. I am informed too that he incurred great expense in procuring his historical materials: himself visiting foreign archives, and grudging no amount of time and trouble; going so far as to learn a new language (I think Dutch), to enable him to interpret the documents he obtained. But the history did not suit the superficial taste of the day, and did not happen to become a text-book. Soon after it appeared, I was talking about it to a highly informed woman, and she said she found it dull, and had thrown it aside; I begged her to try it again, skipping the first volume. When I saw her again she thanked me for my advice, and told me that she had much enjoyed the other volumes. Mr. Helps no doubt, made a mistake in filling his first volume with details, exhibiting his industry and learning, but perplexing by their number and complexity. What a

state of things however, is this, when a work of ability and learning, admirably written, is neglected because some effort is required to get through the first volume! Mr. Helps may comfort himself with remembering the fate of David Hume, the first volume of whose history, beginning with the accession of the Stuarts, found only forty-five buyers during the first year after its publication.

It appears then, that this is a reading age: one in which newspapers, magazines, novels, fill up the hours formerly devoted to the table or the tavern by men; to the kitchen and still-room by women. Mountains of paper and rivers of ink are annually consumed by printers: a new novel appears every day, and a new periodical every month.

Another great change too, has taken place, showing how much more general is the distribution of knowledge than it was formerly. Then, London was not only the head quarters of all writing, it was the only place where good writing appeared: London society, and the London press, regulated the opinions of the kingdom: there is now a press out of the metropolis, and opinions independent of it. We have lately had an elaborate statement of this fact, and that in a weekly paper of the highest class, by a most competent writer who has carefully considered the subject.

"We believe that the political importance of London itself has very seriously declined. Twenty years ago, and still more forty years ago, the political importance of London Society was very great,—indeed so great as to be almost over-ruling. The opinion of a limited class, living in rather a confined district, alarmed Ministers, affected the House of

Commons, and surely, though slowly, influenced the whole country. News came first from that class. The papers which reflected their views gave the tone to all discussion. The clubs which were full of their thoughts, were the clubs whose thoughts it was needful for whippers-in and editors to ascertain. This power has passed away. If a new Mr. Barnes sought in all clubs to hear what Englishmen thought of a new Queen's trial, he would in all human probability, hit upon a view his countrymen would reject. The opinion of Belgravia, though still socially influential, is politically valueless,—is not the opinion which will ultimately guide affairs. That region, for example, was never more unanimous than on the merit of Mr. Forster's Education Bill, yet it has been found extremely difficult to pass that measure. Power has passed to an electorate which does not take its views from London society or come from London,—which prefers its own views, its own politics, and to a growing extent, its own men. There is even a dislocation of ideas between London and the provinces so great that an article, reflecting very accurately the ideas of the club world, is criticised in Manchester or Birmingham *because* it reflects them, as an expression to be scrutinized with something of hostility, not accepted as a guide. At the same time, while their opinions have thus lost weight, the London journals have lost their ancient monopoly of news. The telegraph has equalized the position of almost all localities. Birmingham knows everything of importance as soon as Belgravia, and Edinburgh reads the gossip of the lobbies at the moment when it is being read in London. Indeed Birming-

ham is apt to hear the news first of the two, for the country dailies, unembarrassed by some London expenses, are liberal in collecting news, are interested about it, and succeed to a remarkable extent in obtaining it. For the same reason the local papers pay well, the proprietors find it their interest to buy good writing, their employés are less hampered by the invisible chains of London 'society,' and their leaders tend to improve — have improved, indeed, so rapidly, that there are now provincial dailies which, as vehicles of general information, surpass all but their very best London rivals. While therefore London declines, the provinces advance, until, in the north more especially, there is a perceptible transfer of journalistic power."<sup>(35)</sup>

If this passage had been written outside London, it might have been suspected of provincial partiality and exaggeration: appearing in a long established metropolitan paper it must be confessed to be as disinterested as it is remarkable. It is another proof of the very general distribution of mental cultivation up to a certain point; and cultivation once really confined to Middlesex, but now found in many other counties, especially as we travel to the north rather than to the south, the east, or the west of London. We see therefore, how it is that the demand for light literature, and the remuneration of amusing authors, are so great as Mr. Chambers describes them to be.

Still there remains the fact, that the reading of the country is superficial: that it is of that kind which gives no trouble of thinking: that it furnishes no demand for books on political economy, or mental



science, or philosophy generally: that it offers no rewards to writers on such topics, unless their works become text-books; nay, does not even recoup their expenses of publication.

Again I say, can no remedy be found?

#### IV.

IT appears from the evidence I have adduced in the last section, that at the present day, while there is a wonderful amount of reading got through, and while the remuneration of authors of light literature is ample, there is at the same time no demand for books of a higher sort, except for such as are adopted as text-books; and that consequently the sale of most philosophical works is so small as not to repay the expenses of publication.

But reflective authors are not merely neglected, they are to some extent personally disliked and despised; they are disliked for their superiority; they are despised for their want of worldly success.

If a man gives himself up to his books, and retires from ordinary life, he takes care to mix with only those few who pursue similar studies or who sympathize with such a student. To him the traders and ordinary professional men are Philistines; just as in a German university city the townsmen are Philistines in the eyes of the students.

But now that public opinion and the press have ceased to be the peculiar heritage of London, the great towns contain a certain number of men addicted to intellectual pursuits, but who also continue to follow their respective trades or professions.

Between such men and the money-getting world there is a natural antipathy which is easily explained. The bookish men are often young; they are probably but moderately successful in life, because their hearts are not much set on money; they are not fond of being directors of companies, even if they have the necessary capital to become shareholders: they do not seem therefore, to be the natural leaders of trading societies. But if in conversation at a dinner-table, there turns up any topic more recondite than the mere news of the day, the bookish man can show his superiority of knowledge, or his greater power of argumentation. The great manufacturer, the rich banker, the self-important railway director, is silenced and wrathful: however much he may respect divine philosophy in the abstract, he hates the young philosopher there present. The trader-magnate takes the first opportunity of slighting the young man he hates; who being annoyed and resentful, seizes the next occasion of differing once more from his enemy and throwing him into confusion. The Philistinism is now well established.

I have said that the student is probably but moderately successful in worldly affairs. Ignorant persons think this strange: they ask how it is that a clever man should fail to get money by his cleverness: how it is that he does no better than his neighbours, or possibly that he does worse than his neighbours. Educated men do not regard this as a mystery. Success in life depends first on harmony between a man's occupation and his faculties: if the man is required to do everyday things for which he is unfit, he probably ends with hating his mode of life: he

neglects his duties, and becomes certainly unprosperous, perhaps a Bohemian.

This is well put as regards the case of the working classes, by M. A. Corbon; who after living forty years “dans les milieux populaires,” is able to speak with authority on the *Secret du Peuple de Paris*. He shows how a distasteful career enervates a man.

“For example: here is a man, young, nervous, evidently full of passion, whom chance, necessity, ignorance of his own capacities, have thrown into a career which does not suit him, or seize hold of him; because not calling upon his proper aptitude, it neither employs nor develops it. This man probably is equally ignorant of the reason why his business, adopted by chance, does not suit him better, and of what would suit him better: (a common case). Thence results a man who works without taste, without zeal, to whom imposed labour must be a drudgery so much the more wearisome, because for the workman who has missed his right place there is something within him which protests. The neglected powers will not disappear: they torment their owner: they want to break out: they will break out, and sometimes after a deplorable fashion. In the meantime, they produce in the inner man the disorder of which I have spoken; that uneasiness caused by efforts to restrain them: then come discouragement and self-abandonment. Then the man is on the edge of an abyss; and the stronger is his pith, the more surely he will fall. To save him from falling, and from joining the criminal ranks, he must be seized with some strong and durable passion, independent of his business; for example, for a woman worthy of him, or for some

extraneous pursuit, fitted to his real tastes, and which will employ his superfluity of vigour. Or again; some renovating notions, taking possession of his mind, may offer him one of those wide prospects which console a man under the insufficiency of his every-day life. Political and social agitation, has certainly been a strong preservative for many energetic natures among the people, against demoralization.”<sup>(36)</sup>

What is true of Parisian workmen, is true of all workmen, and of all busy classes, especially among the young. But it is eminently true of men of speculative minds, of men who delight in thinking. To them, ledgers and letters on business are hateful.

This distaste to daily drudgery may be conquered by necessity; and in fact numbers of industrious men do overcome it, moved to the conquest by a desire for money, or for that comfort and that independence which the possession of money gives. David Hume was a remarkable example of a highly reflective man, who steadily through life strove for pecuniary independence, which he at last obtained. Yet he was equally an example of distaste to drudgery.

“I passed through the ordinary course of education with success, and was seized very early with a passion for literature, which has been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of my enjoyments. My studious disposition, my sobriety, and my industry, gave my family a notion that the law was a proper profession for me; but I found an insurmountable aversion to everything but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning; and while they fancied I was poring upon *Voet* and *Vinnius*, *Cicero*



and *Virgil* were the authors which I was secretly devouring.”<sup>(37)</sup>

Finding the study of law disgusting, Hume tried a situation as a mercantile clerk at Bristol, but soon abandoned it. He then resolved that small as his independent income was, it should be enough to supply his wants; and when, at thirty-six years old, he was worth a thousand pounds he called himself independent. Happily for him, he lived in the intimate friendship of Adam Smith, Robertson, Adam Ferguson, and all the literary circle which then adorned Edinburgh. The best humoured and kindest of men, he was rather wanting in sensibility if Turgot can be trusted;<sup>(38)</sup> but cannot be charged with having adopted the French recipe for happiness; a good digestion and a cold heart.

If Hume however, had lived either in a luxurious society, or among thriving traders, he would have cut a poor figure: his so-called independence based on the saving of £1,000 by fifteen years' self-denial, would have been regarded as something like a proof of madness. His failure to get money would have looked like indolence: the ill-success of his *Treatise of Human Nature*, which fell dead-born from the press, and of his first volume of *The Stuarts*, twenty-five copies only of which were sold the first year, would have been deemed a convincing proof of want of even literary ability.

Adam Smith spoke of authors in his time as an unprosperous race: Mr. Chambers tells us at present that popular authors are well paid: Mr. Lewes however, informs us (and we know it from other sources), that philosophical and reflective authors are as

unprosperous as ever. They do not make money : they do not even get back the expenses of their publications. Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, if published now, might be as little bought as Sir William Hamilton's or Mr. Herbert Spencer's speculations : Hume's first volume on *The Stuarts* might fare as ill as Mr. Helps' *Spanish Conquest*. Philosophy puts no money into the purse.

Now respect for wealth is nothing new : I do not know that it is more servile than it was formerly : we certainly have no practice so degrading as that of the *Sportula* given daily by Roman patricians to their clients. Even the patron of Johnson's time, has now ceased to make presents in return for fulsome dedications.

There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the *patron* and the jail.<sup>(39)</sup>

There is then among us a craving for wealth, as indeed there is more or less at all times and in all places. Indeed, nothing surprised me more, when I was a reader of Plutarch, than to find the general imputations of venality against great orators, soldiers, and statesmen : imputations not confined to heavy Thebans or versatile Athenians, but extending even to hardy, blunt men such as Agesilaus : so that at last I asked myself whether after all there might not be some truth in the accusations made against Demosthenes himself of having taken bribes. This universality of passion for wealth, though it does not justify it, must be taken as a mitigation in particular cases : since to say that a man longs for riches is only to say that he is human.

Among the idle classes, money is desired as a means of purchasing gratifications. Among industrious men it is desired more as a proof of success, and as an instrument of further trading operations. The desire of success is very powerful among those earnestly engaged in any pursuit: it is a far more advantageous stimulus than the mere longing for personal gratifications. A man who begins with a little, and by industry, prudence, skill, and foresight, has amassed a fortune, has a right to rejoice in his success. The danger however, of this state of mind is obvious: it causes a man to despise those who have not been equally fortunate: it generates that Philistinism which looks contemptuously at the scientific or literary or philosophical man, who has employed his time in pursuits far higher than those of commerce.

David Hume, if he had remained in the Bristol counting-house, mechanically observing the stipulated hours, but with his mind intent on the philosophy of commerce and of human nature, would have remained poor and subordinate, and would have been treated with condescension by the rich West Indian merchants and African traders, as a good sort of young man whose thoughts were always going wool-gathering. Auguste Comte, long painfully maintaining himself by teaching mathematics, and then throwing himself on the alms of his admirers, must have been regarded by industrious and successful traders as an incumbrance on the world.

There are no doubt, many traders who rise far above entire indifference to higher pursuits: but even such men can scarcely appreciate a David Hume or

an Auguste Comte while he is struggling towards reputation. Even if Hume, remaining in Bristol, had written his remarkable works, there would have been no immediate success to show his greatness: his *Treatise of Human Nature* would have cried from the trunk-makers in vain; the forty-five sold copies of his first historical volume would have earned him a contemptuous pity.

The world at large cannot judge of original merit: country gentlemen, manufacturers, club loungers, labouring to appreciate uncommon opinions, will end with patronizing fools or knaves. Philistinism is in the nature of things inevitable.

Mr. Walter Landor has the following in his *Imaginary Conversations*.

“The commendations of these people are not what you would think them, left-handed and destructive: for singular must every man appear who is different from his neighbours; and he is most different from them who is most above them. If the clouds were inhabited by men, the men must be of other form and features than those on earth, and their gait would not be the same as upon the grass or pavement. Diversity no less is contracted by the habitations, as it were, and haunts and exercises of our minds. Singularity, when it is natural, requires no apology; when it is affected, it is detestable.”<sup>(39A)</sup>

The critics, the writers of articles, are supposed by the ignorant to be infallible oracles. The more instructed are apt rather to treat them as they would have treated the heathen oracles, and to say in their haste that all men are liars. Even the ignorant, if they read more than one journal, must be sometimes



amazed to find how the utterances of the oracles contradict each other.

I remember a striking example, in the case of an author whom I have the less scruple in seeming to censure, because I have already said of his great work how worthy of praise I regard it. Mr. Helps, in 1858, published a Russian Tragedy, *Oulita the Serf*. I happened to see two notices of it; one in *Fraser*, the other in the *Saturday*.

*Fraser's* article was written in a strain of elaborate admiration. The writer, after highly praising, as all must praise, the *Friends in Council*, for "its gentle playfulness, its intense honesty, its comprehensive sympathy, its earnestness so tempered with the desire to do justice to all," and after adding that he had no personal acquaintance with Mr. Helps, went on to say that he had expected a great deal from this tragedy, and that his expectations had even been surpassed.

"It is a noble and beautiful work. It is strongly marked with the same characteristics which distinguish the author's former writings. Its power and excellence are mainly in thoughtfulness, pathos, *humour*. . . . The language of the tragedy is such as might have been expected from its author. There is not a phrase, nor a word from first to last, to which the most fastidious taste could take exception. . . . It is a purely and perfectly original work. Its author has constructed his own plot, and imagined his own characters. It is very well for writers who have no higher aim than to supply the immediate exigencies of the stage, to quarry in the abundant mine of French invention: and to copy,

borrow, or adapt, as the phrase now runs. But we should have been greatly surprised had the author of *Friends in Council* resorted to that cheap method of producing a dramatic work.”<sup>(40)</sup>

The writer assumes that the tragedy was really intended for representation.

“He was resolved to *give the English stage* a really original work : and holding firmly, as we know from his former writings, that some kind of amusement is a pure necessity of life, . . . he has sought to show that . . . it is possible to make a play such as that in amusing it shall also instruct, refine, and elevate.”

This eulogy appeared in May, 1858, and had the well-known signature, A. K. H. B. On the 12th June following, the *Saturday Review* had an article in a very different tone by an author who well understood the art of damning with faint praise.

“If the author of *Oulita* is, as he is understood to be, an eminent essayist and historian, his admirers may approach the examination of his dramatic effort with the comfortable assurance that his fame rests securely upon a different foundation. If his tragedy is not very successful, he has influenced in other ways the mind of his age, and he may share in some degree the apology of the great Greek statesman, who, ‘could not play on the harp, but could make a small town a great city.’ It must be remembered, however, that Themistocles confined himself to the occupation of making a small town a great city, and did not attempt to play upon the harp. There are three degrees of competency and incompetency—to be able to do a thing, to be unable and know that you

are unable, and, to be unable and not know that you are unable. Nobody would have found fault with Richelieu for not writing good pastorals, but much fault has been deservedly found with him for complacently publishing bad ones.”<sup>(41)</sup>

*Fraser* had assumed that *Oulita* was intended to be acted: what says the *Saturday*?

“It is perhaps candid to admit that it is always with a predisposition to yawn that we take up a dramatic poem. Dramas not intended to be acted seem to us almost to profess lifelessness and parade vapidity. . . . It will be perhaps said that we are assuming *Oulita* to be a dramatic poem not intended for stage representation. We are very confident, however, that the assumption is well founded.”

A. K. H. B. had spoken of humour as one of the main characteristics of the tragedy: the *Saturday*, after throwing in some praise of Mr. Helps’s well stored mind, of his generous and true sentiments, his command of language, and his fair facility in versification, pronounces that:

“The humorous parts appear to us decided failures. That they should be so is no very great reproach. One dramatist alone, perhaps, has possessed a mind sufficiently comprehensive to combine humour and tragedy with complete success.”

Anyone who had not read *Oulita*, would be likely enough to say that the one article was written by a friend of the publisher, the other by an ill-wisher to Mr. Helps. It happened that I had read *Oulita*; and having made up my mind that it was rather insipid, I was disgusted with the fulsomeness of *Fraser*, and

only regretted as regards the *Saturday's* article, that its tone was less considerate towards Mr. Helps than I thought it should have been.

The outside world then, cannot safely take its guidance from the critics, that is from the writers in newspapers and magazines ; since the most various and contradictory opinions are put forth by them : and the more a man knows about the trade of reviewing, the less he respects its results. I have often been asked the question, whether I have arranged for notices of a new volume : I am thought indolent because I do no such thing. I am told that I do not advertise enough. I am thought squeamish because I do not insert in a new work extracts from favourable notices of former works : such extracts, if I followed the example even of respectable publishers, being so detached as to give an unfair representation of the actual articles. "Your friend A. B. will no doubt give you a review in a certain periodical." My friend A. B. certainly could not refuse to do so if I asked him ; but that is just the favour which I am ashamed to demand, because it is asking a man to praise one.

I do not pretend to believe that all reviewing is interested or dishonest : two at least of the weekly papers, are conducted by men of scrupulous honour. But more than honour is wanted to make a man impartial : there is wanted a freedom from intimacies and friendships with literary men : no sympathetic and kindly critic living in London, can say all he thinks : could you imagine Sir Walter Scott writing a severely just article in the *Quarterly* against Hogg or Leyden ?



A dozen years ago, there was in London one man who stood aloof from the literary world ; and living for the *Spectator*, which he had himself established, shut up his heart against all the blandishments of cliques and all the indirect bribes of publishers. I may be partial in my estimate of Mr. Rintoul, because when I was a young author, he gave me a notice which a literary friend said many authors would value at a hundred pounds.

I do not hold up Mr. Rintoul's life as one worthy of imitation ; such an isolated existence is forced and unnatural. Yet without it, it is nearly impossible for a critic to be severely just.

As regards the graver forms of literature, the fault is not so much in the critics' hearts as in their heads : they would do justice if they could, but they know nothing of the subjects of the works they have to review. An author of acknowledged merit, who has got the ear of the world, brings out a book on Political Economy : it must be noticed at once : as due appreciation is impossible, the writer who has to do the article, turns over the pages till he finds something he can understand ; and upon that he spins out his dozen pages of manuscript. The book itself may contain a good many mistakes ; it may be deficient in those facts which ought to verify and illustrate its doctrines ; it may exhibit little originality ; it may have only the hints, considerable no doubt, of a clear arrangement, due proportions, and a lucid style : but it is to be praised, and it is declared to be a great work, worthy to be a rival of the *Wealth of Nations*.

The natural antipathy then, between industrious workers and speculative thinkers, must needs con-

tinue, unless some new means can be found to do for men in the matter of criticism what they cannot do for themselves. Bookish men will for the most part continue unsuccessful in getting money: condemned to pursuits for which they are unfit, they will follow them negligently or throw them up altogether: even where the struggle for wealth on the part of traders is more a desire for success than a desire for the superfluities of life, it is impossible for such men to do justice to students, who in many cases arrive slowly at the position they deserve, and whose treatment by periodical critics is altogether uncertain and whimsical.

Some aggravation of this disregard of *idéologues* (as Napoleon called them) has been caused no doubt, by the prodigious advance of late years in the mechanical arts and in natural science. Watt's inventions have transformed England from an almost agricultural country, into the greatest of manufacturing countries: Fulton's inventions have realized the Eastern dreams of sailors defying wind and tide: Stephenson's inventions have almost satisfied the modest desire,

“Ye gods, annihilate but space and time,  
And make two lovers happy :”<sup>(42)</sup>

the inventions of Oersted, Morse, and others, have turned us into magicians “who contract with the lightning to carry our messages.”

By the side of these amazing results, the finest discussions in mental philosophy are disregarded; and men turn a deaf ear to the assertion that in the long run the world is governed by ideas. We cannot won-

der that some moral philosophers look sorrowfully at this mechanical advance, and almost denounce Watt and Fulton and Stephenson, as men who have unwittingly blinded the eyes of men to matters affecting their highest destinies; as men who have so exalted the material world as to hide from our view the far more important intellectual and spiritual worlds.

Even the great progress of natural science has tended in the same direction. The certainty of its results seizes on men's attention. When Franklin with a silk handkerchief, a ball of twine and a key, stealthily, under fear of ridicule, drew down electricity from the clouds,<sup>(43)</sup> everyone could verify the result. Volta's electrical battery could be imitated by any experimenter. If a naturalist brings home from Asia a new species of insect, he exhibits it at a meeting of naturalists: when Sir Humphrey Davy by means of galvanism decomposed the alkalis, he showed the very potassium and sodium he had obtained. It is far different with intellectual discourses: they are disputed by the philosopher's contemporaries, and only slowly received by succeeding generations.

Reflective students then, cannot be appreciated by ordinary men of the world: since in money-getting students are an unprosperous race, and since even in their own pursuits they only slowly attain to eminence, they are inevitably despised by those who more rapidly succeed in what they undertake.

## V.

IF the present unhappy condition of things were only temporary, we might be content to await the cure which time would bring. Much more should we be content to wait, if we saw that improvement had really begun.

But idleness is a human weakness found in all places and in all ages: *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. I have already quoted Plutarch's censure, illustrated by Cæsar's rebuke of the frivolous. In our own country, under a very different social condition, Sir William Temple thus complained. "I am not ignorant that the vein of reading never ran lower than in this age; and seldom goes further than the design of raising a stock to furnish some calling or conversation."<sup>(44)</sup>

Who knows anything of Vico, the author of the *Nuova Scienza*? Yet some French authors pronounce him the equal of Montesquieu in originality of views, to say nothing of logic or learning. Montesquieu however, had gained a popular reputation by his *Persian Letters*, a book of no scrupulous modesty: besides that he wrote his *Esprit des Lois* in a style requiring little troublesome thinking to understand it, whereas the *Nuova Scienza* is scholastic, hard, and dry; a book to be studied, not read.

In the last century the learned author of the *Analogy* was equally severe in his remarks.

"The great number of books and papers of amusement, which, of one kind or another, daily come in one's way, have in part occasioned, and most per-



fectly fall in with and humour, this idle way of reading and considering things. By this means, time, even in solitude, is happily got rid of without the pain of attention; neither is any part of it more put to the account of idleness, one can scarce forbear saying, is spent with less thought, than great part of that which is spent in reading. Thus people habituate themselves to let things pass through their minds, as one may speak, rather than to think of them. Thus by use they become satisfied with seeing what is said without going any further. Review and attention, and even forming a judgment, become fatigue, and to lay anything before them that requires it is putting them quite out of their way.”<sup>(45)</sup>

Jeremy Bentham was later by half a century than Bishop Butler: he experienced the truth of Butler’s remarks. The small sale of his works is proved by the incongruous collection of them issued after his death: this edition, if it can be called such, was not a reprint, but a bringing together of his unsold publications, in every variety of type, and with almost as many publishers as works: Taylor, M’Creery, Effingham Wilson, Heward, Hunt and Clarke. It is true that Bentham’s style was generally affected, uncouth, and oppressive: but “the most original thinker of his day” ought, notwithstanding his mannerism, to have had a considerable class of readers.

Again; the offensiveness of the style is not a sufficient excuse: for his *rédacteur*, Dumont, wrote in an easy unaffected manner, and yet his books were neglected here. On the 10th June, 1803,

Dumont wrote thus to Romilly from St. Petersburg.

“Could you have believed that as many copies of my *Bentham* would have been sold in Petersburg as in London?

“A hundred copies have been disposed of in a very short time, and the booksellers are asking for a new supply. This has obtained for me a welcome from many persons, which I am turning to account. The work is admired, and the editor modestly takes his share of the admiration. But what has most surprised me, is the impression made by the definitions, classifications, and method, and by the absence of those declamations which had been so wearying to sound intellect.”<sup>(46)</sup>

Dumont's assertion is confirmed by the fact, (as I believe) that what he published in French in 1802, was not translated into English till 1817.

Coming down to 1836, we find the late Master of Trinity writing thus:—

“In the conclusion of his survey, he speaks of the spirit of speculation on this subject, as all but extinct in this country. I would willingly believe that this is too desponding a view of the fortunes of moral philosophy among us;—that the youth of England are far from indifferent on the questions which concern the nature and laws of man's highest faculties, and which excite a vigorous and generous love of speculation in other parts of Europe. Perhaps the publication of this work in its present form, may serve to exercise such a speculative disposition. To such a result I look forward the more gladly, because I do not doubt that the reigning philosophy of any age, even when it excites little direct atten-

tion, influences powerfully men's convictions and habits of thought; and I am persuaded that we cannot make the prevalent views of morals sounder, purer, and more philosophical, without improving the general intellectual and moral character of the educated classes of the nation."<sup>(47)</sup>

But is any improvement taking place; or such improvement as would justify us in leaving matters alone? I fear not. Indeed I sometimes fancy we must have been growing worse than our fathers: as for example; when I look at Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and find that eleven editions had been published as early as 1808, I ask whether such a work, set off no doubt by singular perspicuity but without any of the higher graces, could find such a sale at the present day. Probably it was used as a text-book.

I should have supposed that Mr. J. Stuart Mill would have been disposed to look favourably at his own generation, because his two greatest books, having had the well-merited good fortune to be adopted as text-books, have gone through numerous editions. Yet he has within a few years republished the following passages, censuring the superficiality of his generation.

"In the intellectual pursuits which form great minds, this country was formerly pre-eminent. England once stood at the head of European philosophy. Where stands she now? Consult the general opinion of Europe. The celebrity of England, in the present day, rests upon her docks, her canals, her railroads. In intellect she is distinguished only for a kind of sober good sense, free from extra-

vagance, but also void of lofty aspirations; and for doing all those things which are best done when man most resembles a machine, with the precision of a machine." . . . .

"Out of the narrow bounds of mathematical and physical science, not a vestige of a reading and thinking public engaged in the investigation of truth *as* truth, in the prosecution of thought for the sake of thought." . . . .

"Guizot, the greatest admirer of England among the Continental philosophers, nevertheless remarks that, in England, even great events do not, as they do everywhere else, inspire great ideas. Things, in England, are greater than the men who accomplish them."<sup>(48)</sup>

In another place, Mr. Mill says:—

"Literature has suffered more than any other human production by the common disease. When there were but few books, and when few read at all save those who had been accustomed to read the best authors, books were written with the well-grounded expectation that they would be read carefully, and if they deserved it, would be read often. A book of sterling merit, when it came out, was sure to be heard of, and might hope to be read, by the whole reading class; it might succeed by its real excellences, though not got up to strike at once; and even if so got up, unless it had the support of genuine merit, it fell into oblivion. The rewards were then for him who wrote *well*, not *much*; for the laborious and learned, not the crude and ill-informed writer. But now the case is reversed. This is a reading age; and precisely because it is so reading an age, any book which is the



result of profound meditation is, perhaps, less likely to be duly and profitably read than at any former period. The world reads too much and too quickly to read well. When books were few, to get through one was the work of time and labour: what was written with thought was read with thought, and with a desire to extract from it as much of the materials of knowledge as possible. But when almost every person who can spell, can and will write, what is to be done? It is difficult to know what to read, except by reading every thing." And

"The world, in consequence, gorges itself, with intellectual food, and in order to swallow the more, *bolts* it. Nothing is now read slowly, or twice over. Books are run through with no less rapidity, and scarcely leave a more durable impression, than a newspaper article. It is for this, among other causes, that so few books are produced of any value. The lioness in the fable boasted that though she produced only one at a birth, that one was a lion. But if each lion only counted for one, and each leveret for one, the advantage would all be on the side of the hare. When every unit is individually weak, it is only multitude that tells. What wonder that the newspapers should carry all before them? A book produces hardly a greater effect than an article, and there can be 365 of these in one year. He, therefore, who should and would write a book, and write it in the proper manner of writing a book, now dashes down his first hasty thoughts, or what he mistakes for thoughts, in a periodical. And the public is in the predicament of an indolent man, who cannot bring himself to apply his mind vigorously to his own

affairs, and over whom, therefore, not he who speaks most wisely, but he who speaks most frequently, obtains the influence.

“Hence we see that literature is becoming more and more ephemeral: books, of any solidity, are almost gone by; new reviews are not now considered sufficiently light; the attention cannot sustain itself on any serious subject, even for the space of a review article. In the more attractive kinds of literature, novels and magazines, though the demand has so greatly increased, the supply has so outstripped it, that even a novel is seldom a lucrative speculation. It is only under circumstances of rare attraction that a bookseller will now give anything to an author for copyright. As the difficulties of success thus progressively increase, all other ends are more and more sacrificed for the attainment of it; literature becomes more and more a mere reflection of the current sentiments, and has almost entirely abandoned its mission as an enlightener and improver of them.”<sup>(49)</sup>

Mr. Mill republished these passages in 1859, when he had arrived at the full maturity of his experience. No grave writer of recent days has received more bribes to speak well of his own generation. Son of a great and well known thinker; brought up from childhood in that circle of philosophical radicals, whose influence has advanced until it has at last greatly modified every institution of the country; coming before the world while still a youth as the *rédacteur* of a great work on *Judicial Evidence*; editor successively of two quarterly Reviews; living in London, and well known to every literary circle and every publisher; instructed by

his frequent periodical writings in the important art of *economy* of words, that is of keeping within his own mind all those opinions the divulging of which would destroy his influence; carefully observing this economy until the excitements of the House of Commons unloosed his tongue and committed him to opinions little favourable to his popularity; he has had every opportunity of exhibiting his great talents, and of securing the full recognition of them. When such an author complains of popular neglect, and of difficulty in finding a purchaser of copyright, the case must be bad indeed.

I fear then, we cannot say that improvement is taking place. Many, I know, hold that we are getting worse every year. Dr. Arnold, in his day, declared that each generation of schoolboys was more childish than the preceding: the change however may have been in his own growing years. Others have expressed the same opinion; maintaining that the multitude of novels and periodicals divert the minds of youth from serious pursuits. For myself, I confess that after long pondering the question, I have found no conclusive evidence. There can be no doubt however, on one point: that the quantity of grave reading at present, bears a very small proportion to the whole quantity of reading; that while the number of books read has augmented tenfold, the number of grave books read has augmented little, if at all. Still more certain is it that there is great need of improvement.

There is little doubt that Mudie and his imitators have caused mischief in this respect. Much as Mudie has done to facilitate the distribution of new

publications, to relieve the tedium of wet days in country houses, and to cheat the weariness of chronic invalids, I fear that he has been an obstacle to the sale and circulation of serious works. It was said formerly, that the private book-societies were numerous enough, to take off an edition of 500 copies of any book favourably reviewed. Such books might pass through half the circulation of a club without being cut; but two or three of the members would read them more or less, and at the annual sale they would pass into various bookcases. Mudie's list will now have the names of these works, and his purchase may reach a dozen, a score, perhaps a hundred. In the book societies the best read member probably, was secretary: his reading was higher than that of the members generally; and in consideration of the services he rendered, he was permitted to gratify his own taste by purchasing books which were caviare to the general.

A late paragraph on circulating libraries, rather supports the opinion that there has been a deterioration of late years in the style of our reading.

“Long before ‘Mudie’ was born, or the London Library Company thought of, Mr. Hookham (who died on the 15th May, 1867) supplied the reading public (not quite so extensive, by the way, as it now is) with all the newest works in every department of literature, on the principle of circulation which has since his business days so rapidly grown amongst us. In continental literature, Mr. Hookham was as great as Mr. Murray is now in travels, and his name was familiar to everybody in Europe who took an interest in any literary subject. ‘The Library’ in



Old Bond Street, was the habitual resort of the literary men of the day, and at all times they met with a courteous reception from the proprietor. Amongst the changes which came over establishments of this kind when the taste for reading became more generally diffused, and lighter literature superseded to a great extent the more solid works for which Mr. Hookham's house was noted, 'The Library' in Bond Street became the property of a company. Mr. Hookham had attained his eighty-first year."<sup>(50)</sup>

Mr. Mudie's system supplied a want and is irresistible, but it would be absurd optimism to say that therefore it is in every respect beneficial. Ten years ago it was the subject of a fierce attack in the *Literary Gazette*: here is a specimen.

"Mr. Mudie, we believe, undertakes 'that all the best works' in all departments shall be freely supplied. Is he the best, or is he a tolerable judge, or is he any judge, of 'all the best works?' Such an advertisement may do to bring him guineas, but is it true? Does not Mr. Mudie often set himself against one of the leading works of the day, and assign as a cause of its rejection that it cannot be got? Here is not only an injustice done to a book, but to the subscribers; and it is the more entirely an injustice, because it was not suffered to be known that Mr. Mudie's personal antipathy was the cause of its suppression. It is only very exceptional when every one likes a book. One of the greatest authoresses of the age once said to us, 'That she wondered how any one could read *Adam Bede*,' and so to persecute any book after Mr. Mudie's manner, could only be

effectually carried out by the cut and dry excuses of his *employés*, who give every reason in their hirer's interest, but the true one." <sup>(51)</sup>

We cannot put down Mudie : let us see whether we can find the means of correcting the evils which he has caused or aggravated.

The unsatisfactory condition of other nations may afford comfort to some, who are ill disposed to any reform ; and who can say that as we are suffering from a disease common to all, we may resign ourselves to it. It may be urged that the Americans are more superficial in knowledge, more extravagant in their spiritualism, wilder in their religious schisms, even than we are. I presume that this is so ; though their earnest and practical support of Mr. Herbert Spencer's philosophical works, strangely neglected by ourselves, must suggest to us that there is in the United States a considerable class of readers, who laboriously dig below the mere surface of knowledge, and who study books which really require them to think.

We have already seen that according to Mr. Laing, confirmed by Mr. Buckle, the condition in Germany of readers generally, is more deplorable than our own : that while the universities there are doing an amount of original work unthought of elsewhere, and while the philosophers possess a learning and a reach of thought which places them at the head of the civilized world, the people, though educated in the mere elements of knowledge, are yet more superstitious, more prejudiced, more really ignorant, and more unfit for self-government, than are the French or the English. As regards the working classes I

can offer a singular confirmation in the recent testimony of Professor T. E. Cliffe Leslie, a gentleman not disposed to overrate the good qualities of his countrymen.

“On the other hand, as regards the effect of Prussian military training and State supervision on the national character, there are occasions on which the superior individuality of the Englishman is conspicuous. A very large coal proprietor in the Ruhr basin, employing many English as well as Germans, assured me that when an accident occurs the Englishman will do on the moment the best thing to be done, while the Germans stand at attention waiting for orders, probably given to them promptly by their English comrade. As an individual, the Englishman *is*, if I may venture to express such an opinion, naturally superior to the German. His history down to the last fifty years was a much happier one, his personality was more respected, and, what is no small matter, he was and still is (leaving out the agricultural labourer) better fed. Among the Germans at the Westphalian mines the type of the Englishman appeared to me by comparison heroic and majestic.”<sup>(52)</sup>

Among the Germans then, even of the north, you have a lower class, able to read and write, but without the individuality and self-confidence which are the peculiar privilege of men who have long been free: you have a middle class devoted to their gains and their occasional amusements, devoid of sympathy with the university professors and philosophical thinkers. Philistinism is rampant.

In France the case is different: there, the revolu-

tion of '89, while it pulled down the throne and the nobles, and raised the condition of the people, produced also the unfortunate result of destroying the former class of lettered men. The learning of the Benedictines is no more : the recluses of Port Royal have disappeared.

“ It is especially when the great labours of erudition are in question that earnest men have a right to complain of superficiality in the maxims of our days. These labours, not being susceptible of any practical application, and addressing themselves only to a clique of the learned, cannot have among the public either readers or admirers. The institutions which once furnished singular facilities to such studies, such as the university corporations and the religious orders possessed of much leisure, have disappeared or have changed their character. The classes which before the revolution brought to patient research a learned quota of labourers, clergy, magistracy, and bar, are now absorbed in the duties or passions of their order, and no longer find time for unmercenary occupations. The state imagines that it has advantageously replaced by ministries and administrations, the independent mechanism of the old régime, but really is at a loss how to deal with these delicate studies. More bent on encouraging what is called talent, appreciated by the many, than on exhibiting esteem for works essentially aristocratic, the state as a judge in such matters is for the most part careless, frivolous, or uncertain. Besides ; the new conditions imposed on material life by the economical transformations of the age, are altogether opposed to the pursuit of pure research. The nobleness of such



research consists in the absence of pecuniary value, in supplying the demands of a small class of readers. The devotee has few wants but he still has some wants. He must reside in Paris; he must have a great library, and must take literary journeys. What can become of him in a social condition where so-called statesmen have deliberately raised the cost of living, and have made Paris uninhabitable for all but the luxurious? Unless we take care, all this will result in a great impoverishment of the most important branches of mental culture.”<sup>(53)</sup>

If patronage of real learning has declined, if universities and convents and ministries have ceased to nourish it, the French public, unfortunately has become more and more fond of cheap trash.

“Above all, there has existed, for some time past, in certain quarters, a strange desire for cheapness, a competition for low-priced talent. As in material life cheapness has been sought, though with small success, so in literature there is a desire for cheapness, and for a mixed, dull, vulgar, if not dangerous, style of writing, which adapts itself to all tastes and every kind of inquisitiveness; which assumes various forms and pursues one even in travelling. A literature indeed has been found to take the place of the traveller’s guide. Everywhere there is a multiplication of libraries which substitute quantity for excellence. And this is true not only of books and libraries, but of newspapers also, of literary journals which solve the problem of a low-priced intellectual life. It is really almost by accident, without choice or consideration, that these singular encyclopedias are composed. What matters it as to wit, reflection,

or even truth? There may be fragments of history, or romances, memoirs of every kind, ambiguous translations, philosophy, or travels. In these whimsical miscellanies there is one peculiarity: it is that the predominance of the greatest abilities ceases, and that talent of the lowest kind is valued as highly as that of the first order. All are reduced to the same level. Must we not see how trebly dangerous are these allurements? As regards the public, the readers of every class who are addressed, there is a kind of organized proselytism of vulgarity or of corruption. What, in fact, are the greater number of these publications, which possess the sovereign merit of cheapness, as if it were of the essence of literature to be as cheap as possible? They are principally tales wanting in originality and taste, trivial fictions, all those inventions, in a word, which have enervated the moral sense of the day. Is this the diffusion of intellectual light? is this anything that we may call a popular literature? For authors, the effect of these influences is to divert them from grave and bracing labour, to convert them into journeymen of a speculation, and to force them to labour distasteful, enervating, and ephemeral. The book-trade itself gains nothing. The production of literary works loses its price: it is performed carelessly. Even in classical books there is an increasing want of care, besides another visible symptom in a diminution of their sale. Formerly, publishing was almost one of the liberal arts, and was an intellectual profession: now even the intelligence of trade is debased.

Thus everything is degraded; and by a sort of fatality, there has arisen a vague and undefined me-

dium in which everything gets printed, because the public accepts whatever is offered; in which even courtiers have written their memoirs, and in which the notion of intellectual laws has become as faint as the notion of morals.” (54)

At all times then, and in all countries, there has been the same general neglect of philosophy and of severe literature. How should it be otherwise? Will ordinary men labour for that which brings no reward? Will they toil and moil for the mere satisfaction of knowledge to be acquired? And what labour is so severe, what toil is so exhausting, as the labour and toil of vigorous and continued thought?

Plutarch, Temple, Butler, Bentham, Dumont, Whewell, Mill, Mazade, all tell the same tale of frivolous and superficial literature growing and still growing. Germany, the land of true and great universities; France, once the seat of Benedictine learning; England, the native country of Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, are either negligent of all literature, or drowned in a flood of frothy books requiring no thought to understand them.

Surely it is time to consider anxiously what can be done. Things have been left alone long enough: *laissez-faire* has had its day, and a very bad day it has proved to be. The world had outgrown the need for such government interference as was formerly exercised: therefore, men concluded, all government interference is injurious. Our fathers were mistaken in this inference; and we, having found out their error, are retracing our steps: in factory acts, in amended poor-laws, in education, in art teaching, in a hundred other departments of life, we have successfully invoked the aid of Parliament.

“ But it is in literature, above all, that a change of this sort is of most pressing urgency. There the system of individual competition has fairly worked itself out, and things cannot continue much longer as they are. Literature is a province of exertion upon which more, of the first value of human nature, depends, than upon any other ; a province in which the highest and most valuable order of works, those which most contribute to form the opinions and shape the characters of subsequent ages, are, more than in any other class of productions, placed beyond the possibility of appreciation by those who form the bulk of the purchasers in the book-market ; inso-much that, even in ages when these were a far less numerous and more select class than now, it was an admitted point that the only success which writers of the first order could look to was the verdict of posterity. That verdict could, in those times, be confidently expected by whoever was worthy of it ; for the good judges, though few in number, were sure to read every work of merit which appeared ; and as the recollection of one book was not in those days immediately obliterated by a hundred others, they remembered it, and kept alive the knowledge of it to subsequent ages. But in our day, from the immense multitude of writers (which is now not the less remarkable than the multitude of readers), and from the manner in which the people of this age are obliged to read, it is difficult for what does not strike during its novelty, to strike at all : a book either misses fire altogether, or is so read as to make no permanent impression ; and the best equally with the worst are forgotten by the next day.” <sup>(55)</sup>



“ En ce qui regarde cette partie supérieure du Progrès, l'Égoïsme est d'une impuissance manifeste.

On le voit bien embellissant et améliorant le monde matériel, opérant avec énergie dans le sens du bien-être, appuyé qu'il est là sur des instincts universels, rémunéré d'ailleurs par des avantages sensibles. Mais les choses de sympathie, d'esprit, d'imagination, de raison pure, qui n'attirent que le petit nombre, qui ne récompensent que les âmes, qui ne fécondent que l'avenir, comment viendraient-elles à une société sous la seule impulsion de l'égoïsme ? Tout cela se cultive et éclot sous des influences plus pures. Il faut un autre soleil à l'exquis et au transcendant. Newton et Leibnitz ont pu se disputer la découverte du calcul infinitésimal : pour moi j'y découvre un autre inventeur, le loisir ajouté à leur génie par la munificence des souverains.” <sup>(56)</sup>

## PART II.

### VI.

IN the former Part, I have treated at some length, on the existence of a great want : in the present Part I have before me the much more difficult task of proposing a means of relieving that want. That men's general reading is superficial, will be conceded : that it would be well for the world if men could be induced to adopt a better class of books, such books as would make them reflect, will be acknowledged by most persons of education : that good writers on philosophy, on social economy, on mental science,

are worthy of support, and at present suffer contemptuous neglect, will scarcely be disputed. But when we come to the how; to the machinery for accomplishing these great purposes; there will perhaps be as many opinions as men.

In discussing so difficult a question, the first requisite is the clear determination of the object we propose to accomplish. I should define this in general terms to be, the raising of the intellectual standard of the nation. As thinkers, we are at present superficial; I would we were profound: we are whimsical; I would we were sober: we are gluttons of what is ephemeral; I would we were gluttons of literature and philosophy which have endured and will endure. Men read too much: they use their eyes, not their brains: I would have them read *multum non multa*.

But to accomplish this object, we must act on three different classes: on authors, on readers, on the world at large.

To authors we must give motives for persistent study: a sense of just treatment; a consciousness of surrounding sympathy; a circle of eager readers; a share of those rewards which naturally follow industrious effort.

Readers must be induced to abandon the present miserable practices of seeking mere amusement: of shutting up every book which requires attention; of skipping all passages which call upon them to think; of yawning at the faintest attempt to treat them as reasoning beings. They must have their attention aroused: they must be stirred up to cross the threshold of severe thought: by seeing rewards bestowed

on painful and prolonged study, they must learn its real value ; and they must be awakened to the hope that some of themselves may hereafter share the hard-earned honours open to all.

Instruction should be given to the world generally : to that world which regards journals as the greatest of intellectual productions, and the tall talk of popular newspapers as the highest results of literature. We must teach such Philistines that genius and study are something more than names : that the ready talent which can scribble an article in the smoking of a cigar, is curious but not admirable : that the witty critic, who flounders and sinks whenever he ventures on an attempt at reasoning, is but an insect of the hour destined to perish. To the city, the exchange, the club, mere talk is vain : our preaching must be the preaching of action. We need not and we cannot rob the Bohemian or the wit, of his natural remuneration ; but we can and we must search out the genius and the student, and crown them with such rewards as the vulgar can understand.

“Comprehensive intellect is nothing in any given sphere of society, until the persons of whom that society consists can be brought to see that such a thing exists. Once its existence understood, and then like law, or like conscience, which is nothing but a comprehensive understanding of moral relations, its right to judge and decide is admitted as a matter of course.”

Our end then, is to raise the intellectual standard of the nation : to accomplish this end we have to act on authors, on readers, on the public ; on authors by giving them sympathetic readers and fitting rewards ;

on readers by attracting them within the sphere of authorship, and by awakening in them a just appreciation of intellectual superiority; on the public, by exhibiting intelligible rewards bestowed on men who have hitherto been in their eyes unsuccessful and contemptible.

I have said that authors require motives for persistent study. At present there are abundant inducements to the abandonment of such study, few to its continuance. Even authors must live: a man of original genius finds that he can easily live if he will give up his researches, which at the end of twenty years may do honour to himself and his nation, and if instead of following these he will compile textbooks or write for periodicals. Southey, at the close of a recluse and laborious life, found little income from his works, and had to live principally on what he received for his articles in the *Quarterly*. What if, instead of Eastern poems and American history, he had devoted himself to philosophy and metaphysics? His case would have been still worse, for instead of deriving some income from his labours, he would probably have lost by every volume he published.

But some students have independent means of living; or they unite profitable writing with independent research. Such men however, may well be oppressed by a sense of injustice. If they are wise indeed, they are not troubled with envy of the great money rewards heaped upon light literature; they shut their eyes to the glitter of punsters and light satirists and venal critics: but they do feel themselves aggrieved, finding their laborious studies utterly unknown or despised.



The prevalence of such injustice is amazing. Let us turn to *Haydn's Universal Index of Biography*, edition of 1870. We find there the names of Albert Smith, of Miss Braddon, and of Lord Dundreary : we do not find the names of such mathematicians as Mr. Silvester and Professor Henry Smith ; of such publicists as Mr. Maine, Mr. Goldwin Smith, and Mr. Bagehot ; of the greatest of living English linguists, Dr. Badham ; of such a philosophical writer as Mr. Spedding ; of such a metaphysician as Mr. Herbert Spencer ; of such chemists as Mr. Roscoe and Mr. Gore ; of such political economists as Professors Cairnes and Leslie, and Mr. Macleod ; of the great director of primary education, Mr. Lingen. The compiler of this Index intended to do justice. He has fairly expressed the habitual and unconscious injustice of the world. To many sensitive minds such treatment is oppressive and discouraging : happy are those whose minds are not very sensitive !

All this might be borne more easily, if the student had around him an inner circle of men who sympathised with his life : who, instead of despising him as an idealist and visionary, applauded his devotion to something higher than worldly success. In truth, if the student can persevere, and does not utterly make shipwreck in the struggle, he may at last find such a circle of men, who more or less share his pursuits, and give him credit for his disinterested career. Too often however, poverty, impatience, disease, or death, intercepts such good fortune. Yet men of the highest distinction feel the want of such a sympathising circle. Niebuhr, when ambassador at Rome, complained of the absence of that stimulus

which his Berlin friends supplied when he was among them.

But the best of all sympathy is that shown by readers unknown to the author; by readers outside the immediate circle of friends. A neglected author, casually finding himself appreciated by a competent judge in Cambridge, or New York, or Florence, takes comfort, and renews his hope for the future.

One of the aims we should set before ourselves is to widen the circle of readers, so that a student when he issued a volume, the result of study and reflection, might be secure of such a sale as would repay the expense of publication. Is it possible to hope that a day may come, when a book on mental philosophy or social economy will bring some money reward, even though the work should be unfit for a text-book? Is it utterly utopian to anticipate a time when an Auguste Comte may be spared the hard necessity of maintaining himself by giving lessons in mathematics, and the humiliation of afterwards living on the alms of his admirers; when a Herbert Spencer may not have to print by a subscription grudgingly given, and may escape the necessity of suspending his publication until Transatlantic assistance or a timely legacy furnishes the necessary funds? We may conceive that as a popular novel or a rhetorical history sells now by tens of thousands, a work on philosophy may hereafter find hundreds or a few thousands of buyers.

In the mean time, since pecuniary compensation is as yet impossible, there is a pressing necessity for bestowing other rewards; in order that the solitary student, before he has found a circle of friends,

whilst he is in danger of pining away through neglect, may be at least cheered with the expectation of at length earning that appreciation which he sees obtained by others, and of sharing rewards formally and distinctly offered to all who can prove a title to them.

I have said that in the interest of authors it is most desirable for the circle of students to be widened, so that a considerable number of men and women may be found ready to welcome any new work on the gravest subjects; to sympathise with its author; to furnish his natural remuneration by buying his productions. Readers themselves have an equal interest in the change. It would add to their immediate happiness as well as to their permanent well-being, to convert their present slipshod perusal of light literature, into an earnest attention to the lessons of philosophy: they would find life greatly increase in value, when their minds were constantly kept in condition by bracing exercise.

The first and greatest difficulty is to get men over the threshold. Minds eminently fit for fathoming the depths of philosophy, may begin with a distaste to the necessary exertion: others, quite capable of following the exposition of complex theories, will scarcely be brought to listen, unless some intelligible inducement is offered. But when the elements of knowledge are mastered, the further pursuit of a subject is pleasant. The old lawyer, retired from his profession, still loves to discuss the niceties of cases before the courts: to dispute the decisions or the *obiter dicta* of the Chief Baron or of a Lord Justice. The engineer or gentleman farmer, who

earned prizes in his youth for chemical studies, will read with deep interest of the modern Correlation of Forces, or of the successful experiments on hydro-fluoric acid. A man who when young understood Locke, Brown, and Dugald Stewart, will be very likely in after life to go on to Reid, Kant, Hamilton, Mill, Spencer, and Bain: to Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer: to Auguste Comte, Littré, Cousin, and Vacherot. Forced like a Roman bride over the threshold, they will not desert the houses of their adoption.

Let ample rewards be offered and duly conferred, such rewards as ordinary men appreciate, rewards that being constantly before their eyes will not be forgotten; and the now careless, volatile, or sluggish readers of Mudie's truckloads of books, will inquire with interest what are these higher studies, pronounced by learned judges to be worthy of renown. Get these men while young over the first elementary difficulties, and they will afterwards constitute a permanent circle of students.

But the greater part of the world reads nothing higher than a newspaper. Perhaps if visible rewards were in prospect, some of these might be converted to better things; and once within the charmed circle, might remain there from higher motives than desire of visible rewards. Even if no such men came in, yet they have sons and daughters, whom they desire to see advanced in life. At present a rich contractor, himself ignorant of real greatness, sends his son to Eton, and then allows him £1,000 a year at Christ Church, that he may become the boon companion of a rowdy Duke. If an intelligible reward were offered



for intellectual excellence, he might encourage his son to study, might give him every advantage of real education, might so far improve him as to make him one of those who sympathised with abler students. Forty years ago Mr. Babbage advanced this opinion as to natural science.

“It is highly probable that in the next generation, the race of scientific men in England will spring from a class of persons altogether different from that which has scantily supplied them. Requiring, for the success of their pursuits, previous education, leisure, and fortune, few are so likely to unite these essentials as the sons of our wealthy manufacturers, who, having been enriched by their own exertions, in a field connected with science, will be ambitious of having their children distinguished in its ranks. It must, however, be admitted, that *this desire in the pursuits* would acquire great *additional intensity, if worldly honours* occasionally followed successful efforts; and that the country would thus gain for science, talents which are frequently rendered useless by the unsuitable situations in which they are placed.” <sup>(56A)</sup>

Make philosophy honourable and distinguished in the eyes of the world, let it lead to intelligible success, and philosophers will have plenty of followers: the truths they teach will be more widely known, and will gradually permeate the masses of mankind.

## VII.

OUR aim then, should be, to elevate the intellectual standard of the nation; to encourage grave authorship; to stimulate severe reading; to repress the Philistinism of vulgar riches, and of impertinent idleness. In order to accomplish this grand purpose, we must confer rewards; such as will give dignity to able and laborious writers, will divert the present shallow stream of reading into deeper channels, will command the respect and envy of successful men of the world.

What rewards will perform these wonders? Before this question is answered, I will say what rewards would not be successful.

M. Dumont, in discussing the theory of rewards and punishments,<sup>(57)</sup> admits that virtue cannot be fitly and advantageously rewarded; but contends that remarkable services of whatever kind may be so. Now it can scarcely be disputed that severe and continued study of philosophical subjects is among the most important services: since it helps forward that higher condition of mind which distinguishes the civilized man from the savage, and the more civilized from the less.

Among possible rewards M. Dumont mentions wealth, exemptions, power, honours.

Pensions and large grants of money are out of favour at present. Indeed, they have never been much given under our limited monarchy, with a House of Commons jealous of royal profusion: thus, while under Louis XVI during Necker's minis-

try,<sup>(58)</sup> the pensions of all kinds amounted to a million sterling a year, those of Great Britain were only a tenth of that amount. Of the sums given, part were well directed; Jenner for example getting first and last £20,000: others seem to us foolish; as that under Charles II, to a man who discovered harts-horn; and another to a medical man for a dye. Among some of the enemies of patents, it is the fashion to regard Parliamentary rewards as a substitute for them; but most persons see clearly that this would lead to endless solicitations and jobbery: that importunate intrigue would carry off the rewards, while modest merit would be neglected. But if it is impossible for the crown, the ministry, or the House of Commons, to judge impartially of the merit of a mechanical or chemical invention, more clearly impossible would it be so to decide on the fitness of an author for recompense: the more original the thinker, the less chance would he have of being appreciated.

Academical honours will naturally be thought of. Let us suppose that the universities of Oxford, London, Edinburgh, offered their highest degrees to men of whatever age, who had written original books on philosophy, on mental science, on social economy. The authors so distinguished would derive gratification from these distinctions: other men would read their books, would themselves make attempts to follow their example. But the effect would be rather transitory. Besides; it would not reach the world at large, which troubles itself little about degrees however honourable.

The establishment of local universities is with

some persons a panacea: it is thought that if we can bring high teaching to men's doors they will readily avail themselves of it. I fear there is not much hope from that source. Local Colleges by all means; but the more the examining bodies are centralized, the better will it be for real learning. Then again: if the public cares little about a degree conferred by Cambridge or Glasgow, still less value will be set on one conferred by its own town. To a Manchester manufacturer, an Owens-University degree would not be the true hall mark.

Our universities at present confine their honours to youths: our Royal Society deals with mature men. The honours of that body however, are generally confined to natural science or social influence. Some years ago indeed, it was resolved to admit a number of fellows on the ground of excellence in economical and statistical studies; and the title of F.R.S. was conferred on several gentlemen who had addicted themselves to such of these topics as are commonly discussed in Section F of the British Association. But even if the Royal Society were to undertake the fostering of mental and social science, it could do very little as it is now constituted. Outside the circle of natural philosophy, its title is little valued by men not living in London: it leads to nothing: the fact that a man has it is unknown or forgotten: it is notorious too that if it is often conferred on merit, it is also often conferred on intriguing block-heads and empty men of rank: while the necessity for a man to placard himself a candidate, revolts men of delicacy.

Our Royal Society concerns itself principally with



natural science. It has been a matter of regret to many persons, that we have not had other antagonistic societies, together constituting perhaps an Institute as in France: each society standing to the Institute in the relation which is borne to the University by the Colleges of Oxford or Cambridge.

The French Academies (and especially The Academy,) have not been without fruit. Literature and philosophy apparently, are more revered in France than in England. In many cases excellent works are selected for praise and are crowned, and thus become introduced to the public. An example is before me in M. Guerry's great book on *The Moral Statistics of England and of France*; the manuscript of which was formally approved of in 1833 by the Academy of Sciences: M. Guerry was encouraged to persevere in his thorny and unpopular career, and thirty years later (1854) published his large volume, with coloured maps.

But I fear that the establishment of such Academies in England, would produce only a moderate effect, and that slowly. The general public would pay little or no attention to their proceedings, which would be classed, at the best, with those of the present Royal Society. We want something more vigorous, more striking, more intelligible to the many.

A body of this sort too, must of necessity take into account something more than intellectual excellence.

“Nothing can be more natural than that the French Academy should wish to accommodate itself to the feelings and the prejudices of society, and that

it should not *wish to lead*, so much as to keep on the level of the educated classes. We may be sure that in England any learned body would have done just what the French Academy has done." (in rejecting M. Littré the distinguished apostle of Comtism) "No English Academy would think of electing a Comtist against whom a Bishop had just written a pamphlet. In every society there is some point beyond which the liberty of opinion is not sanctioned; and in none of the leading countries of the world is there so much narrowness, and indifference to truth, and timid apprehension for the fabric of society, as in England when once the odd, unreasonable prejudices and standing insular traditions of Englishmen are affected." <sup>(59)</sup>

No wonder that Auguste Comte himself felt unkindly towards academicians.

"Besides, outside of trade, this double condition of practical supremacy is not usually better satisfied. It is still less so among the learned, and especially in France, where the academical régime has so narrowed the mind, dried up the heart, and enervated the character, that most of these men are impotent in actual life, and are utterly unworthy of all command even in science." <sup>(60)</sup>

It has been remarked that an Academy governed by the majority of its members, that is by elderly men, represents the spirit of the past. Of course, these men will not choose as colleagues bold and original thinkers such as Auguste Comte. It does not seem absolutely necessary however, that vacancies should be filled up by self-election (or coöptation). But whatever might be the mode of election, such

men as Comte would have little chance of distinction. We cannot legislate for genius : it stands alone and outside all human arrangements. Individual patronage it may get : not the patronage of the public.

In some countries ; in France and Italy for example ; considerable money prizes are periodically offered for the best treatises on one subject or another. Such rewards produce a certain good effect, by stimulating men to study good and important topics. But we want something wider than this. Competition for a prize may help to carry a man over the threshold of first difficulties : it may happen to direct his attention to a topic of which he was ignorant, and to give him an abiding interest in it ; as in the case of Clarkson, whose competition for a prize awakened him to the iniquity of the slave-trade, and made an apostle of him. But such an effect is casual. We want an organized and tolerably sure means of selecting and honouring those students who for long years have pursued a grave subject.

Clarkson's case is, no doubt, very suggestive of the effect which the offer of a prize may happen to produce on the mind of a competitor. The present generation knows little of the matter, and therefore I will reproduce his narrative. <sup>(61)</sup>

Dr. Peckard, the Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, preaching a sermon before the University in 1784, denounced legalized slave-dealing as a crime founded on a dreadful preëminence in wickedness ; and in the following year, as Vice-Chancellor, he offered a prize for the best Latin dissertation on the theme, "*Anne liceat Invitos in Servitutem dare ?* or, Is it right to make slaves of others against

their will?" Clarkson, being a senior bachelor, was qualified to compete; and having the year before gained a first prize for another Latin dissertation, he feared he should lose reputation if he failed to do as much on this occasion. He conceived that the African slave-trade was what Dr. Peckard intended to be discussed; but where was the necessary knowledge to be got during the few weeks allowed for preparing the materials and writing the essay?

Fortunately for him he stumbled on Benezet's *Historical Account of Guinea*, which introduced him to the writings of Adanson, Moore, Barbot, Smith, Bosman, and others: men who had been personally acquainted with the African coast; who had had to do with the trade; and who had written impartially, without any anticipation of such a thing as abolition.

"Furnished then, in this manner, I began my work. But no person can tell the *severe trial which the writing of it proved to me*. I had expected pleasure from the invention of the arguments, from the arrangement of them, from the putting of them together, and from the thought in the interim that I was engaged in an innocent contest for literary honour. But all my pleasure was damped by the facts which were now continually before me. It was but one gloomy subject from morning till night. In the day-time I was uneasy. In the night I had little rest. I sometimes never closed my eyelids for grief. It became now not so much a trial for academical reputation, as for the production of a work that might be useful to injured Africa. And keeping this idea in my mind ever after the perusal of Benezet, I always slept with a candle in my room, that I might



rise out of bed and put down such thoughts as might occur to me in the night, if I judged them valuable, conceiving that no arguments of any moment should be lost in so great a cause.”<sup>(62)</sup>

He gained the first prize, and read it out publicly in the Senate-house. Returning to London, his mind remained full of this painful subject.<sup>(63)</sup> On his journey he sometimes dismounted, gave way to reflection, tried to persuade himself that the horrible narratives were fictions. Months afterwards, he still asked himself, are these things true? and answering unwillingly, they are true, he could not resist the inference that “surely some person should interfere.”

This was the beginning of Clarkson’s long career of beneficent and anxious labour, crowned by the abolition of the slave-trade in his middle life, and by the abolition of slavery itself in his old age. He lived on till 1846, to see other great and good deeds accomplished. The impulse given to his youthful mind by a casual prize, much contributed to help forward a great and necessary work: and if such results frequently followed, little more would be wanted than to multiply similar offers.

If these means were generally efficacious, France would be as remarkable for progress as she is liberal in her prizes. I find the following offered in 1868 by the Academy of Sciences alone: the Lalande prize for astronomy; the Montyon for mechanics; the Montyon for statistics: the Laplace for astronomy and the theory of probabilities; an extra prize for the application of steam to war vessels; the Frémont; the Poncelet; the Montyon for experimental physiology; and another Montyon for medicine and

surgery; the Montyon for a treatise on unwholesome arts; and the Bryant of £4,000 for another on the cholera (not awarded); the Jecker for chemistry; the Barbier for the art of healing; the Godard for the subject of reproduction; the Savigny (not awarded); the Desmazières for a treatise on lichens: the Thore for one on coleoptera and termites. All these were given by the one academy.

Greater money rewards will scarcely be suggested. At some future time perhaps, it may be thought expedient and right to give the means of living in learned leisure, to men whose books have entitled them to rewards of honour: the best way of conferring honorary rewards, is what we are at present concerned with: hereafter, when we possess a body of literary and philosophical honourables, it may turn out to be advisable to apply to their maintenance, some part of those national endowments, which as yet serve only to overstimulate and often to ruin the brains of youths who stake their all on university success. But the first thing required is to organize the means of distinction.

Honours of some sort constitute, I am convinced, the stimulus we require. But a mere decoration would I fear be powerless: a morsel of red ribbon worn on ceremonial occasions, rather makes men smile: the letters C.B. after a name are scarcely more valued than those of M.D. or F.R.C.S. The case is worse when such distinctions are profusely distributed; we feel little respect for the sixty-four thousand members of the French Legion of Honour, or the eighteen thousand members of the order of King Leopold in the little kingdom of Belgium.<sup>(65)</sup>

Nor do I think that we should get much good out of an order of merit conducted as such orders generally are.

“I have heard in a lecture about George III, that, at his accession, the king had a mind to establish an Order for literary men. It was to have been called the Order of Minerva. I suppose with an Owl for a badge. The knights were to have worn a star with sixteen points and a yellow ribbon; and good old Samuel Johnson was talked of as President, or Grand Cross, or Grand Owl of the society. Now about such an order as this there certainly may be doubts. Consider the claimants, the difficulty of settling their claims, the rows and squabbles among the candidates, and the subsequent decision of posterity! Dr. Beattie would have ranked as first poet, and twenty years after the sublime Mr. Hayley would, no doubt, have claimed the Grand Cross. Mr. Gibbon would not have been eligible on account of his dangerous freethinking opinions; and her sex, as well as her republican sentiments, might have interfered with the knighthood of the immortal Mrs. Catharine Macaulay. How Goldsmith would have paraded the ribbon at Madame Cornelys’s or the Academy dinner! How Peter Pindar would have railed at it! Fifty years later the noble Scott would have worn the Grand Cross and deserved it; but Gifford would have had it; and Byron, and Shelley, and Hazlitt, and Hunt would have been without it; and had Keats been proposed as officer, how the Tory prints would have yelled with rage and scorn!” <sup>(66)</sup>

What we do want is some honour which will be understood by all; which has its roots in history and

will therefore fall naturally into the course of daily life; which authors, readers, men of the world, will at once appreciate, and which cannot be forgotten: not a university diploma understood by few; nor an award of £100, pleasant enough but transient; nor a bit of ribbon for State occasions; nor a title earned sometimes by merit, often by servility, refused now and then for incapacity, more often refused through political or religious prejudice.

The necessity of having something intelligible in the rank and honours bestowed, was clearly seen by Catharine of Russia. She found it necessary to give importance to the civil service of the crown: she knew that at her court, the only artificial rank which was valued was that of military officers: she therefore attached military rank to civil office. Sir Samuel Bentham, when he entered Catharine's service, in 1784, was made a councillor, with the civil rank of lieutenant-colonel. Under Catharine, Mr. Gladstone might have been a civil Field-Marshal, Mr. Bright a General of Division, and Mr. Childers an Admiral. Such artificial rank is, fortunately, unnecessary among us. But if we want to introduce new distinctions, if we want to convince men of the world that men of the pen are really worthy of honour, we must adopt such decorations as the public will understand.



## VIII.

WHAT I maintain then, is that the same kind of honour should be bestowed on literary and philosophical superiority, that is now bestowed on military, naval, and civil superiority. An order of merit must be established. I may seem to have condemned such an institution, by my quotation from Thackeray. In truth, I only condemned an order bestowed at the arbitrary pleasure of the Sovereign.

Such an order is nothing new. Mr. Carlyle has the following passage on his hero Frederick.

“Favour, friendly intimacy, it is visible from the first, avails nothing with this young king; beyond and before all things he will have his work done, and looks out exclusively for the men ablest to do it. Hence Bielfeld goes to Hanover, to grin out euphuisms, and make graceful court bows to our sublime little Uncle there. On the other hand, Frederick institutes a new Knighthood, *Order of Merit* so called; which is indeed but a small feat, testifying mere hope and exuberance as yet; and may even be made worse than nothing, according to the Knights he shall manage to have. Happily it proved a successful new Order in this last all-essential particular: and to the end of Frederick's life, continued to be a great and coveted distinction among the Prussians.”<sup>(67)</sup>

Napoleon, notwithstanding his dread of *idéologues*, was bent on honouring men of science and literature in the mode already established in France.

“‘The only reasonable encouragement for literature,’ said the Emperor, ‘is a place in the Institute, because this gives to poets a character in the State.’ He would have liked the second class of the Institute to form a kind of literary tribunal, with the task of giving an impartial and detailed criticism of new works of merit. He spared no pains to honour the memory of learned men deceased. From Osterode, covered as he was with the dust of battles, he ordered that a statue of D’Alembert should be placed in the theatre of the Institute. He built a mausoleum to Voltaire and another to Rousseau.

The busts of Tronchet and Portalis, the authors of the first draft of the Code Napoléon, were placed in the hall of the Council of State.”<sup>(68)</sup>

More recently, Sardinia followed in the same track.

“This luckless decoration,” the great cross of the Order of St. Maurice, “has been, to speak the truth, rather remorselessly dragged in the dust since 1848 (the Legion numbers now 11,000 knights!), and those who have a right to wear it take good care to lock it up in their desks; but the same cannot be said of the *Military and Civil Order of Merit of Savoy*, which is only given to few men, and all personages of real distinction. The last batch for Civil Merit shows the names of Michele Amari, the Sicilian historian; Rossini, the composer; and Scialoia, the economist. This cross is often awarded to illustrious dead persons, and the pension which is attached to it (600f. in this instance) is inherited by widows during their lifetime, and orphans to the time of their coming of age. But at the head of the list of four

knights, I read the name of Luigi Tosti, a literary monk of the Order of Montecassino, author of valuable books on Church history, and known for a good chronicle of the famous abbey in which he has taken the vows.”<sup>(69)</sup>

Germany again, has a modern order of merit.

“With startling rapidity one great master after another is gathered into his last rest. Scarcely three months ago the learned world had to mourn the death of Boeckh, the greatest Hellenist of our time. Another loss has now befallen it in the death of Franz Bopp, which took place at Berlin on Wednesday last. It was only last year that the ‘Bopp Foundation’ was founded on the fiftieth anniversary of the writing of the introduction to his famous ‘Comparative Grammar.’ Born in 1791, he, too, had reached a rare old age, full of success and honours. He was one of the thirty Germans who were created knights of the newly created order *pour le mérite* for arts and sciences in 1842. It will be difficult to find a successor to Bopp.”<sup>(70)</sup>

The practice of conferring such honours has been defended by Dumont, the interpreter of the radical Bentham.

“A graduated scale of ranks is an admirable institution, whatever may be said by the extreme partisans of equality. To prove this proposition would be to write a treatise on constitutional principles, that is on the distribution of political power. I must limit myself here to general observations. To establish a diversity of ranks, is to create a new source of rewards, by means of a tax of honour scarcely felt by the contributors. It

increases the power of Government by a gentle and seductive influence, far different from coercion, which is liable to violent reaction. It augments the sum of human happiness. It opens a new prospect to hope, the most valuable of all possessions. It awakens in the heart an ambition other than that of fortune. It nourishes emulation, that powerful and gentle stimulant to every excellent quality. I say nothing here of the abuse; which is not inseparable from the thing itself. I only say that the principle is excellent, and especially when the gradual advancement depends upon services.”<sup>(71)</sup>

It is more surprising to find Bentham himself negotiating for a decoration, in connection with his scheme of a Panopticon Prison.

“The station of jailor is not, in common account, a very elevated one. The addition of contractor has not much tendency to raise it. Education, profession, connexions, occupations, and objects considered, I hope I should not be thought unreasonable in wishing to be preserved from being altogether confounded with those by whom these situations have been hitherto filled, and from finding myself a sufferer in estimation by having performed a public service. In this view, two expedients present themselves:—one is, the assurance of your assistance towards obtaining a Parliamentary sanction for the offer of standing examination in manner above-mentioned: the other is an eventual assurance, that, if after a fair trial the success of the undertaking, and the propriety of my conduct in it, should appear to have been fully ascertained, I shall be recommended to his Majesty for a mark of *distinction not pecuniary*, such as may



testify that I have incurred no ultimate loss of honour by the service, and afford me some compensation for the intervening risk.”<sup>(72)</sup>

His conduct however, was consistent with his advice to others, “Fortunate Americans, fortunate in so many things, if to enjoy happiness it were enough to possess all it consists in! This good fortune is still yours. Respect the simplicity of your manners; beware of ever permitting an hereditary nobility. The patrimony of merit would soon become that of birth. Give rewards, raise statues, *confer titles*; but let these distinctions be personal. Reserve all the force, all the purity of honour; never alienate this valuable possession of the State in favour of a haughty class who would soon use it against you.”<sup>(73)</sup>

Many liberal thinkers, I know, condemn Bentham as wrong in principle and practice. Hear Mr. Buckle.

“The mere statement of such questions proves the absurdity of the principle which they involve. For, unless we believe that kings are omniscient as well as immaculate, it is evident that in the bestowal of rewards they must be guided either by personal caprice or by the testimony of competent judges. And since no one is a competent judge of scientific excellence unless he is himself scientific, we are driven to this monstrous alternative, that the rewards of intellectual labour must be conferred injudiciously, or else they must be given according to the verdict of that very class by whom they are received. In the first case, the reward will be ridiculous; in the latter, it will be disgraceful. In the former case, weak men will be benefited by wealth which is taken

from industry to be lavished on idleness. But in the latter case, those men of real genius, those great and illustrious thinkers, who are the masters and teachers of the human race, are to be tricked out with trumpery titles; and after scrambling in miserable rivalry for the sordid favours of a court, they are then to be turned into beggars of the State, who not only clamour for their share of the spoil, but even regulate the proportions into which the shares are to be divided.”<sup>(74)</sup>

Thus wide is the difference between Bentham and Dumont on the one side, and Buckle on the other. Mr. Buckle has thrown together rewards of honour and rewards in money: we are concerned with the first alone. As to his “monstrous alternative,” I see nothing “disgraceful” in calling upon scientific men to determine what works are worthy of recompense; since this is exactly what is done in all schools and universities. Titles are “trumpery” or not according to the fitness with which they are bestowed. When the Duke of Wellington took his seat in the House of Lords for the first time, he had been decorated successively with the titles of Baron, Viscount, Earl, Marquis, and Duke; he had honestly earned them all by pertinacious devotion to his duty and by the highest military exploits: these titles did not seem trumpery: Bopp died, one of the knights of an order of merit, and his title does not seem to me trumpery: I should say the same of Luigi Tosti, the historian, decorated for his literary services. Mr. Buckle condemns all such men as having “scrambled in miserable rivalry, for the sordid honours of a court:” but if the honours were

bestowed for real merit, and this were determined by the verdict of scientific men, there would be no more scrambling for sordid honours than there is in the case of young men competing for the Smith's prize at Cambridge, or for a scholarship at the London University. There are trumpery honours; those namely, bestowed by mere court favour, without any regard to merit: even baronetcies and peerages conferred on political supporters of a ministry, though backed by the possession of great estates, can scarcely be regarded with much favour, though necessity may justify them.

I can understand those who would do away with all titles: who would have no formal distinctions of rank: to whom every man should be "Citizen." But I am dealing with what now is, not with what may be hereafter: with the present time, not with a distant utopia. So long as we go on giving crosses and titles to generals and admirals, knighthoods to court physicians and equerries, baronets and peerages to political supporters, so long we ought, I maintain, to give honours to the real services rendered by industrious genius, to those services which are unappreciated by the public, and which bring no pecuniary rewards: services which, far from securing worldly success, make worldly success nearly impossible.

I am not defending men who seek rank and title as things good in themselves. While I do not blame Sir Walter Scott for accepting the baronetcy freely offered to him, I admire the refusal by Southey of the same honour, on the ground that his fortune was insufficient to maintain it fitly. An appetite for

mere title is absurd enough, and is not to be confounded with a desire for honours fairly earned by constant industry. "An abject worship of princes, and an unaccountable appetite for knighthood, are probably unavoidable results of placing second-rate men in prominent positions."<sup>(75)</sup>

What then, is my defence for giving honours of any kind? I believe that the practice is useful to the state. In this rich country, nay, in every civilized country, there are many men who have an abundant income and much leisure. Unless you can impose on them some public functions, they will constitute an idle class, such as is found in the London Clubs, and in every watering-place: an idle class, from which spring those rank vices which disgrace our modern civilization, as they disgraced the civilization of Greece and Rome. Now men will not begin to devote their spare hours to the public service, unless some credit is to be gained; though having once begun, many of them will go on, and will widen their sphere of exertion, through the interest they find in the pursuit. Honour of some kind must be held out to induce them to enter on this course.

But let us see what creditable functions are open to us of the middle classes: I speak of those living in towns, as being those with whom I am familiar.

A man who has made his own way in the world, regards it as an honour to be made a Guardian of the Poor: in that capacity he learns much of the way in which town business is conducted. After that, if he is an active man, he becomes a member of the Town Council; a body sneered at by men of



letters, but essential to keeping up our traditional respect for self-government; and a body which is in the best sense conservative and anti-revolutionary. In a few years you find him an Alderman; then a Borough Justice. If he lives outside his town, and perhaps buys a small estate, he is made a County Justice: it may be a Deputy-Lieutenant, with the privilege of wearing a uniform, which makes him look like a hog in armour, or what Louis Philippe called a horse-marine. Here and there a man aspires to be a Member of Parliament, and perhaps gets elected.

These steps onwards by which a man becomes Guardian, Town Councillor, Alderman, Borough Magistrate, County Magistrate, Deputy-Lieutenant, M.P., require work, and are in most cases earned by previous work for the public. Sometimes unfortunately this is not so; for election services or personal toadying are answerable for a good many appointments.

“In Lancashire the appointment of the justices rests with a subordinate member of the ministry—the Chancellor of the Duchy: the candidate’s weight, therefore, in local politics, rather than his capacity or position, often forms (even more than in other counties) the qualification for magisterial dignity. The return of a Member to Parliament on the government interest, after a contested election, is wont to produce a batch of new justices, the gratitude of a new member finding a natural vent in the recommendation of his influential constituents to the ministerial justice-maker. This system, which has been on the increase of late years, has given Lancashire

a redundant magistracy. The influence, however, of these supernumeraries has not been in proportion to their numbers. Satisfied with the affix of ornamental letters, and with a millesimal share in the county patronage, they have left the administration of justice to the gentlemen whose character and abilities placed them naturally in the commission of the peace.” (76)

Notwithstanding these abuses, I believe that by such means, on the whole, men of leisure are kept from sinking into idleness; are brought to take a personal interest in public administration; are thrown together in such a way that the once revolutionary are made really conservative, and the extravagantly loyal are reduced to reason.

I admit that the honour in most of these cases is merely incidental: that a man has certain functions imposed on him; that the exercise of these functions is an exercise of power; and that this power gives importance, credit, honour.

It will not be pretended, I think, that these honours are suitable as rewards for meritorious study. A man is made a guardian or a magistrate through some real or imagined fitness for the office; backed more often than not by some considerable wealth. Students for the most part are far from being eminently fit for the transaction of business; and they do not commonly possess much wealth.

Nor can it be pretended that such functions, with the credit attached to them, are thrust upon studious men. It is not among such men that are sought guardians or magistrates. The best-known writers, even, are not chosen for high office, and

especially if their books are of an amusing kind. Thackeray once offered himself as Member of Parliament, but he was not elected; and Dickens, as far as I know, was never a candidate: yet both possessed the power of addressing public assemblies. Even graver literature does not recommend a man to the public. The less important office of county magistrate is given to hundreds of noodles as possessors of land. I cannot recall an instance in which a Lord-Lieutenant has so distinguished a literary man as such. Newspaper proprietors here and there get appointed; but this is through political services rendered, and not out of respect for their literary powers, which are often small enough.

I demand for literature honours of another kind; honours without functions attached. I claim them, not from any consideration of justice towards students themselves; not as probably tending to add to their immediate well-being or happiness. I claim them as a means of giving such importance to deep and continued study, that those who are themselves unable to judge of it, may know upon competent authority that it is a thing to be respected, and may be rendered willing and even desirous to have their sons enter on the same course. I claim them in the confident hope that we should thus create a considerable class of persons addicted to severe mental pursuits, who would form a circle within which real genius would meet its fitting sympathy and encouragement.

These honours should be given as nearly as possible to the best men: not to the safe, the harmless, the feeble, to those who are all things to all men, to

poor creatures who give little offence and make things pleasant. Such mediocrities are the men commonly selected by authority; which naturally shrinks from the bold and independent, dreads their encroachments, trembles before their superiority, resents their plain speaking, that looks like impertinence. Monarchs, ministers, lords-lieutenant, dearly love respectable harmlessness.

Let the crown continue to bestow peerages and baronetcies for political services united to large estates: let it give baronetcies or knighthoods to mayors: let it decorate silken physicians and gallant equeuries: let it wisely initiate a new Star of India, and admit the dusky Hindoos to share in it; or renew St. Michael and St. George, and conciliate the Colonists with British honours: but let any order established for literary merit be free from direct court patronage, with all its humiliations or corruptions.

I have deliberately used the word humiliations. The innocent public seeing such a one gazetted as a C.B., or a baronet, or a peer, imagines that this honour has been bestowed spontaneously. Let us see what Mr. Babbage says about this.

“I have, in the course of my experience, frequently heard of appointments made in the most flattering and unexpected manner; of titles offered, in fact, in such a way that it was impossible to decline them. Having myself seen a good deal behind the scenes of the drama of life, I have repeatedly found that these unsolicited honours have been obtained by the most persevering applications, and by the most servile flattery. Indeed, to the



great scandal of public life, success has in some instances been obtained by a man condescending for a time to oppose his own party, and, as some observer has wittily remarked, ‘of attempting to break into the shop for the purpose of serving behind the counter.’ ” (77)

I remember reading of an amusing instance of solicitation. The heiress of the Percies had married a Sir John Smithson, and, by a peculiar privilege of the family had thus bestowed on him as her husband the title of Duke of Northumberland. The parvenu Duke sought an interview with George III, and asked for the Garter. The king declined to give it. “I am the first Duke of Northumberland, your Majesty, who was ever refused the Garter.” “Your Grace is the first Smithson who ever asked for it.”

“The old British virtues of modesty and self-respect, in the matters of stars and titles, have long been extinguished, if they ever really existed. The multiplication of such attractive titles has effectually stifled all false shame in applying for them. Could any government be just and stern enough to lay down the principle, that whoever asks for honour is unworthy to have it, honours would assume a very different real value from what they now possess; but this, I imagine, was not the case even in Utopia.” (78)

So long as honours are dispensed at the mere pleasure of the crown or the ministry, I fear this kind of solicitation is inevitable. It is just the same with claims for pensions. The crown needs to be informed as to the grounds for bestowing honour or reward. When Sir Samuel Bentham was recom-

mended to claim a pension for his long and zealous services, he was required to hand in a memorial of his good deeds. He was able to disregard the ordinary enumeration of years of office, of painful journeys taken, of long hours kept: he confined himself to such services as originated with himself, and were outside the sphere of his stipulated duties. He could make his claim with a clear conscience; for never had England a public servant who performed his functions with more disinterested zeal: but to us, unaccustomed to official life, what a painful task it seems that was imposed on him; the task of writing a eulogium of himself.

It is with honours as with pensions: a man of modesty and self-respect, who shrinks from blazoning his own feats, will probably be forgotten or disregarded, while a noisy blockhead with a forehead of brass, secures decorations which make himself ridiculous, and which lower the value of such rewards to those who have justly earned them. After the Great Exhibition of 1851, a mayor who had actively promoted the work, was told that he might get a knighthood, if he asked for it. "No," he said, "if it were offered me I would take it, but I would rather go without it than stoop to ask for it."

A recent example exhibits the uncertainty of honours bestowed at the caprice of the ruling powers. A foreign periodical lately contained the following passage.<sup>(78A)</sup>

"England, during the last month, has lost one whom grateful Australia will hereafter honour, as the first to open a road into the interior of this immense continent.

If he had conquered in a pitched battle, troops of effeminate Indians or undisciplined Ethiopians, he would have received the title of Baron and a seat in the House of Lords. Nothing so fits a man to legislate for his fellow citizens as to know how to destroy harvests, burn towns, and kill men by thousands.

But *Charles Sturt*, though a captain in the 39th Regiment, gained no victory with the help of thirty or forty thousand unhappy men. He suffered incredible fatigues: he narrowly escaped a hundred deaths by marshes, by sandy deserts, by impetuous torrents, by struggles with the natives; he returned almost blind, but with the glory of having crossed Australia from shore to shore, and of having distinguished the great provinces capable of cultivation from those which must needs be left to eternal desolation.

This glory was all he got: men have as yet no recompense for those who devote themselves to the advancement of their pacific interests. . . . .

It was in the month of November 1828, that he undertook his first journey, accompanied by one friend, two soldiers, and six convicts. He soon found the Macquarie, the river discovered by Oxley, and which may be called the *current of despair*."

Other journeys he made: after one of them:—

"At last they arrived at Adelaide, but *Sturt was blind*. He died almost in poverty, nearly forgotten by those so deeply interested in his explorations, by those who reaped such great advantages from his discoveries."

I do not adopt the sneers against titles conferred

on great soldiers: perhaps the recent French discovery, that the North Germans are very near and very dangerous neighbours, will convince the most peaceful writers of the truth of Adam Smith's dictum, that one who can neither defend nor avenge himself, is unworthy to be called a man, and may justify military rewards. All I contend for is that peace as well as war has its appropriate honours. What a practical satire is contained in these two paragraphs, in August, 1870! <sup>(78B)</sup>

"A *memorandum* in last night's *Gazette* states that Captain Charles Sturt, late of the 39th Regiment, and formerly Colonial Secretary of the Colony of South Australia, had been designated for the dignity of a Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, *but the appointment was not proceeded with in consequence of his death.*"

"It is notified that Mrs. Sturt, widow of Captain Charles Sturt, formerly Colonial Secretary of South Australia, is to enjoy the same style, title, place, and precedence to which she would have been entitled had her husband survived and been appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George."

It would be indeed a misfortune if an order of merit were established, the entrance to which was to be obtained as a favour from the court. Mr. Buckle justly denounced a "widely diffused error respecting the influence of royal patronage upon national literature."

"This is a delusion which men of letters have themselves been the first to propagate. From the



language too many of them have been in the habit of employing, we might be led to believe that there is some magical power in the smiles of a king, which stimulates the intellect of the fortunate individual whose heart they are permitted to gladden. Nor must this be despised, as one of those harmless prejudices that still linger round the person of the sovereign. It is not only founded on a misconception of the nature of things, but it is in its practical consequences very injurious. It is injurious to the independent spirit which literature should always possess; and it is injurious to princes themselves, because it strengthens that vanity of which they generally have too large a share.”<sup>(79)</sup>

But the crown now means the cabinet, and it may be asked whether we could not trust ministers to exercise the function of patronage.

“If in the long course and compass of history there is one thing more clear than another, it is, that whenever a government undertakes to protect intellectual pursuits, it will almost always protect them in the wrong place, and reward the wrong men. Nor is it surprising that this should be the case. What can kings and ministers know about those immense branches of knowledge, to cultivate which with success is often the business of an entire life? How can they, constantly occupied with their lofty pursuits, have leisure for such inferior matters? Is it to be supposed that such acquirements will be found among statesmen, who are always engaged in the most weighty concerns; sometimes writing despatches, sometimes making speeches, sometimes organizing a party in the parliament, sometimes

baffling an intrigue in the privy-chamber? Or if the sovereign should graciously bestow his patronage according to his own judgment, are we to expect that mere philosophy and science should be familiar to high and mighty princes, who have their own peculiar and arduous studies, and who have to learn the mysteries of heraldry, the nature and dignities of rank, the comparative value of the different orders, decorations, and titles, the laws of precedence, the prerogatives of noble birth, the names and powers of ribbons, stars, and garters, the various modes of conferring an honour or installing into an office, the adjustment of ceremonies, the subtleties of etiquette, and all those other courtly accomplishments necessary to the exalted functions they perform?"<sup>(80)</sup>

Truly, we might condole with a king wanting a garter-king-at-arms, or a chamberlain, and obliged to be himself master of the frivolous subtleties enumerated in this satirical passage.

But as to ministers of state, the case might not happen to be so bad as it is here represented. During the last thirty-five years we have had eight prime ministers: of these, five have been men of great literary culture: Sir Robert Peel, a double first-class man, and familiar beyond his compeers with Horace; Earl Russell, a student and historian; Lord Derby, a spirited translator of the *Iliad*; Mr. Disraeli, a novelist and epigrammatist; Mr. Gladstone, a scholar and a profound student of Homer: the other three, Lord Melbourne, the Earl of Aberdeen, and Lord Palmerston, having at least strong sympathy with such culture. The truth is

that such men are not constantly occupied with the lofty pursuits of statesmanship; a great part of their time being passed in opposition, with abundant leisure to pursue the studies of their youth.

Yet I do not mean to say that it is desirable to commit to prime ministers, however cultivated, the appointments to an order of merit. Such leaders could not help being influenced by politics, and still less could they escape the suspicion of being so influenced. They would be open to solicitation by their partisans; and in some great ministerial or national crisis, would consent to the nomination of an unfit candidate, rather than alienate an important parliamentary supporter. Could Sir Robert Peel have weighed a little damage to an order of merit, against the loss of means to carry the repeal of the corn-laws; or Mr. Disraeli, against the loss of means to carry his reform-bill?

In any order of merit, all solicitation for appointment ought to be excluded. It is painful to find, from the very interesting article by the late Sainte-Beuve on his friend Ampère, the distinguished savant, that such solicitation is exercised in Paris as regards literary honours.<sup>(81)</sup>

Ampère was a most intimate friend of De Tocqueville, and in 1847, received from him a note asking whether he would consent to be presented to the king, on the occasion of having been elected a member of the Académie française. Sainte-Beuve wonders at this inquiry; for, says he, Ampère, though a "*platonic* republican," a republican of the salon, a pure republican of the most lively kind in conversation, had yet always avoided giving offence

by publicly declaring his political opinions or by writing newspaper articles; had been present no doubt at the office of the *National* in Carrel's time, and in days of the greatest excitement, but taking care to suddenly look at his watch and find himself due at the *École normale*. The meaning of all this trimming was, that he "had an extreme desire to enter the *Académie française*, for which he was eminently fit; and during eighteen years he never allowed his politics, strong as they were, to stand in the way of his solicitations (of a literary kind no doubt), and of his unfailing desires."

I should be sorry to see established an English Academy, the members of which should be appointed by any kind of solicitation.

## IX.

IF then, an Order of Merit were determined on, the members should be appointed, not by the caprices of a court, nor by the political needs of a minister, but by the candidates' literary and philosophical deserts, as determined by some public and well understood process. To certain fastidious persons it may appear that to be a candidate at all is equivalent to solicitation. Yet we do not blame young men who offer themselves for a *Tripes* at Oxford, Cambridge, or the London University: we should regard as morbid any student who declined to come forward, and left it to the Dons to search him out and confer honours upon him at their pleasure. Nor do we think ill of that ambition which urges mature men to come before a con-



stituency as candidates for seats in the House of Commons: who present themselves openly, using no private personal influence; who honestly declare their opinions, speak their best, and leave the electors to decide.

This is just what I would have in the case of an Order of Merit: all who pleased should become candidates: certain persons should judge as to their claims: the fittest men should be appointed. I would no more allow private solicitation of the judges, than I would allow it in the case of the Moderators in the Cambridge Tripos. I cannot see that to become a candidate would be any more unbecoming, than it is at present to sit for honours in a university.

In the most important respect however, the candidature for University honours and that for the Order of Merit, should be essentially different. An undergraduate gets a place in the tripos, principally according to the amount of his knowledge of the subjects he professes, together with the rapidity with which he can exhibit his acquirements. But I would have no man admitted to the order merely as a compliment to barren learning.

The honour should be confined to men who had exhibited their powers by original investigation. Every candidate should present to the examiners the articles, pamphlets, lectures, volumes, he had published; and by the excellence of these the award should be determined. The merits of authorship should alone earn admission.

Whether the candidate should be permitted to produce printed reviews of his books, I will not

decide. To allow this, would apparently give a great advantage to authors living in the London literary circle, who could therefore easily secure favourable notices in national periodicals. But whether these were formally produced or not, the examiners would probably have seen them before; whereas the provincial author might have had excellent and suggestive critiques in journals only locally read.

One obvious difficulty presents itself. A candidate tenders certain books published under his name: what security could we have that he really wrote them? A rich man might buy the productions of an improvident, needy genius, and pass them off as his own. Such a case would be rare, but certainly ought to be guarded against.

Some form of examination would be required: not to ascertain the amount of a man's knowledge, and with no intention of determining his comparative fitness for a decoration: the examination would only satisfy the examiners as to the question of the genuineness of the works tendered. Can this man have written these books? Judging by what he has done under our eyes, we believe he may: or, having regard to the ignorance and poverty of thought manifested, we strongly suspect that the books have been written with much assistance from others. In case of mere suspicion, a second attempt, or a conversation, might be necessary.

This preliminary settled, the examiners would then have to decide on the merits of each author's works. The great excellence would be originality: a single volume of genius would outweigh a library

of compilation. Mere newness should not be valued; it might be whim and absurdity: with the newness there must be sound reasoning and sagacity. On the other hand, a mere lecture, or a slight volume struck out at a heat, should not carry the day; especially if it indicated little reading or sustained thought. A thin octavo may be the result of longer study and of more mature reflection, than a heavy folio: Vico's little *Principj di una nuova Scienza*, might enter into competition with Montesquieu's more diffuse *L'Esprit des Loix*.

To secure due care and impartiality, the greatest publicity should be given to every step. I know what well founded objections are felt by examiners to taking the world into their confidence. Conscientious as they may be, they cannot do perfect justice to every paper they mark: all they can say is that on the whole substantial justice is in most cases done. But in the present case, the published works are before the world: would it be right to give to the world also the essays by which is decided the preliminary question, whether the candidate wrote his own books: I state the question without offering an answer, though I lean to the opinion that the essay of the successful man should be published, and that of any other who demands it.

Who should the examiners be? How should they be chosen? Here are momentous inquiries. It is alleged as the fault of all academies, that they represent the past generation, and unwillingly admit as a member anyone representing a novel phase of thought. But the Order would be a kind of academy, and after a time would acquire this attachment to

the past and this dislike to novelty. It is not indeed proposed that new members should be brought in by votes: but the appointment of examiners by votes would frequently be almost the same thing; because it would be known that A would report favourably of a candidate of one school, and B of a candidate of another school. A, for instance, would have regarded Mr. Sadler as half an idiot in disputing the doctrine of Malthus: B would have appealed to M. Quetelet as showing that if Mr. Sadler were wrong, he was at any rate an adversary worthy of regard and respect. Mr. Macleod would have no chance of promotion if the examiner were appointed by the present London Political Economy Club: but an examiner less wedded to established doctrines would give candid attention to M. Michel Chevalier's eulogy, and to M. Richelot's Exposition.

No doubt, more than one examiner would be necessary in each subject. Perhaps the Order might fairly appoint one. As to who should appoint the others I offer no opinion: this is a matter which no one person should pretend to settle: various opinions and suggestions should be invited and carefully weighed.

The immediate success or failure of the Order, would depend a great deal on the character of the first members. When the Order of St. Michael and St. George was lately made a colonial one, it was very much in its favour that it was accepted by such men as the author of *Philip van Artevelde* and Mr. Adderley. But one feels that there would be small chance of having as candidates for the proposed Order, the men who ought to be chosen.



Now the necessity of appointing examiners at first independently of an Order not yet existing, might give the means of evading this difficulty: for these first appointed examiners might constitute the first members of the Order, so far as they chose to accept the honour. How these first examiners should be selected, is another of the questions demanding for their decision the coöperation of many competent men.

This difficulty of starting well I feel to be great; and the requirement I propose, of an essay written by each candidate in the presence of the examiners, would I fear, be fatal at starting. It was said on another occasion:—

“It will be impossible to get men of any professional standing to engage in such a competition. After a certain age, and that by no means a late one, the human mind abhors competitive examinations. It can hardly be expected that a middle-aged man who has his own pursuits and his own position, and who, if he has not utterly failed in life, must have got engagements which occupy his time, would throw them all on one side for the sake of writing prize essays to be submitted to the judgment of a board of examiners for comparison with the performances of men greatly inferior to him in age and experience.”<sup>(82)</sup>

This difficulty is partially overcome by the appointment in the first instance of the most distinguished men as examiners, and as members of the Order. I would supplement this by dispensing with the essay at first. Indeed it would not be required. The danger to be guarded against is that in the long run, some vain-

glorious, unprincipled man, should buy the aid of needy ability, and should strut in borrowed or stolen plumes: but this would not happen till the Order was fairly afoot: I know no reason for supposing that philosophical works hitherto published appear with a fictitious paternity.

It may be thought that in this scheme I am exhibiting the predilection of an enthusiast for competitive examinations; and that having seen them usefully applied to the selection of civil servants, I blindly conclude that they are applicable to a very different matter. I reply that I do not confess myself an unreasoning partisan of competitive examinations: I only believe that on the whole they secure better civil servants than those appointed by favour and by political interest. I quite admit that to make a young man a cornet because he writes good Latin verses, is more absurd than to select a coachman because he is the best of a dozen competing gardeners. I find however, that youths owe their superiority at school and at college, more to industry and docility than to genius. But industry and docility are just the qualities which fit men to be good civil servants. I presume too, that the competitive examinations do in fact present satisfactory results; since I find that during the session of 1870, after all the tirades of years against them, as mere provocatives to cramming, the administration promulgated their determination to extend the application of the system.

Cramming is the watchword of the enemies of competitive examinations; and no one execrates real cramming more than I do.

However, in the case before us, this ignoble art does not come into play: published books are presented; which are the best of them? The examination held is merely preliminary, and is confined to the determination of the question, whether the books tendered are, what they profess to be, the genuine production of the candidate.

Having established this new Order, we should, I trust, carry it beyond that first step which I have indicated. A young man after obtaining this honour might be contented with what he had done, and like too many fellows of colleges, idly lay his head down in the satisfaction of a first success. The Order of the Bath has three grades: the new Order might have the same, obtainable only at intervals of a certain number of years, and by competition among the members of the lower grades. The lowest grade should be a tolerably numerous one: the second grade would contain fewer members, and the third fewest of all.

True, I have said that a man once over the threshold, would follow his pursuit without further inducement. This would often be the case. But some, working in the first instance, from desire of admission, would not get thoroughly imbued with the spirit of their subject: these would be all the better for seeing further honours to be got by seven or fourteen years' more work. It would be just too in itself, that additional labour should have additional reward, in the case of the subjects we are concerned with, which under no circumstances would be likely to bring pecuniary remuneration or general popularity.

At first starting, the highest grade might suitably

be conferred on those examiners, whose numerous and laborious works would have secured them all three grades, if the order had been established in their youth. Such an honour would be more due to such men, than to those who subsequently laboured with the lower motive of obtaining the superior grades.

No one I suppose, would dream of making even the highest grade hereditary. We all feel a certain incongruity in a title of honour which descends to a nobody. In the second generation a Lord Chatham, a Lord Mansfield, a Lord Eldon, a Duke of Wellington, carry about them a practical satire, when their neighbours compare their paternal title with their personal nothingness. This mischief is aggravated when there is no great estate to give a supplementary importance; we have smiled hearing of the Magyars, noble by status, but reduced to labour with their hands for wages.

“M. Freytag’s picture of the condition of the degraded and pauperised feudal nobility” in Germany, after the thirty years’ war, “may be read with profit in Prussia just at the present crisis. (1862) It leaves far in the shade the accounts that have come down to us of the state of the landed proprietors in Ireland about the same period. In illustration of it, M. Freytag quotes largely from a very amusing narrative written by a lawyer who lived shortly after the peace of Westphalia, of the lamentable adventures of a citizen who tried to become a country gentleman, and of the plucking he experienced at the hands of the beggared slips of nobility, who under the popular designation of *Krippenseiterei*, wandered over the country to pick up a living as best they could.”<sup>(84)</sup>



Whether Bentham was right in thus decrying all hereditary titles:—"Give money rewards, raise statues, confer titles; but let these distinctions be personal:"<sup>(85)</sup> is a question not before us. It is clear to me that at any rate, every hereditary distinction should be supported by a competent fortune: and as the proposed order would not bring fortune with it, that distinction should not descend to the son.

## X.

THERE remains the difficult question, what studies should entitle a man to become a candidate. Ought the Order to include learned and scientific men of every kind, or only those of certain kinds?

We have in this kingdom many distinguished mathematicians: notwithstanding the disgust and denunciations of Sir William Hamilton, we shall, I hope, continue to have them: may they not put in a claim to a share of these distinctions? I reply that mathematicians already have ample rewards in scholarships, fellowships, professorships, college livings: rewards in money and honours.

The same may be said of classical acquirements; which lead, through university honours, to high places in public schools and in the church: to head-masterships, canonries, deaneries, and bishoprics.

It is true that some successful students, declining to take orders, are shut out of these valuable offices, and want a career in after life. This hardship however, would not be removed by conferring on such men an honour which carries with it no money reward: what they want is employment and income.

It may turn out that when we feel the full effects of the abolition of religious tests in the universities and colleges; when the church has been widened so as to admit large classes now excluded, the changed circumstances may demand other honours for university acquirements: but for the present there is no pressing need for them.

I must point out also, that the honours I propose are intended not for youths, but for mature men: as rewards for the efforts of a life: as a means of inducing students to continue their labours after their education is finished. They would be suitable for Barrow, Newton, Bentley, Porson, Airy, Whewell, Arnold, Grote, William Veitch; but not for senior wranglers or senior classics as such.

Historians may make a stronger claim. No doubt, an author like Macaulay already gets his full reward: writing a narrative, half biography, half "epic;" studying to make every sentence intelligible to a parlourmaid; avoiding all recondite allusions; interspersing no philosophical reflections; playing the part of an eloquent advocate, not of a judicial thinker; he earned a national reputation, and sold his large volumes by tens of thousands. Hallam again, though dry in thought and frequently careless in style, but laboriously accurate, found a wide circulation, because his works justly became text-books. But there are other historians of whom we hear less, because they have neither interested the vast class who read for amusement, nor supplied the smaller class of students with text-books. These men may say that without some extraneous recognition and honour, the thorough study of history cannot permanently flourish.

The friends of natural science will perhaps maintain that it wants support and stimulus as much as history. In an article on the late Edward Forbes, I find the following remarks.

“With but very few exceptions, the leaders of society and of public affairs, and the great mass of those who follow them, know next to nothing of science, and care as little. A man who let out in conversation the supposition that the author of the *Waverley Novels* was also editor of the *Family Bible* would be looked upon as a dunce; but if the benches of both Houses of Parliament were questioned on the point, not one-half of our legislators would be found to know whether the deceased naturalist was, or was not, the same Professor Forbes who so long adorned the Chair of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh. It would be rash to guess how small the number may be who have any distinct idea of what either of them has done for the progress of science. It is a mere delusion—perhaps in some ways a useful one—when men of science imagine that their achievements fill a large place in the eyes of their countrymen. A brilliant lecturer may attract a crowded audience to the Royal Institution, or to the Museum in Jermyn Street, but the whole number that frequent these places in a year make up a mere rivulet beside the ocean of London Society. Scientific reputations, however high they may stand among the select few, do not spread as other reputations do, because the most ardent admirer encounters among the outer world a dense wall of ignorance that remains impervious to every appeal for sympathy.”<sup>(86)</sup>

Yet after all, natural science has considerable recognition in this country. The fellowship of the Royal Society, gives weight among those classes whose good opinion a scientific man values. The British Association too, during a generation, has spread through all the great towns and their adjoining districts some interest in natural philosophy. If the audience of the British Association includes but a small part of London Society or London visitors, the reports of the lectures often occupy a considerable space in the daily papers.

Though original investigations in chemistry, in chemical physics, in geology, in physiology, bring no money rewards; the profit going to unscrupulous patentees and practical manufacturers, while the ingenious and laborious investigator bestows his time and money without payment; yet this man does get recognition: any chemical discovery is seized on by the scientific world; its truth is admitted; its author is eulogized.

Now moral and political philosophy are more unfortunate than natural science. Their votaries are unhonoured as well as unrewarded: they have no Royal Society to listen to their papers and publish them: they have no great Association to recognize their merits. Even the Social Science Association makes no pretence of discussing principles of mental science or political economy. A really able thinker publishes a series of volumes on the science of mind: he is praised in a journal or two, and gets many American admirers; but at home his works are unsold and unread. Another succeeds in earning the praises of Frenchmen and Germans for his studies in political



economy: not only is he neglected by the public, but he has not even the notice of the periodicals: despite this foreign recognition, England leaves him in utter obscurity.

These neglected topics then, seem to have the first claim. They require a stimulus: and this cannot be equally said of natural science. Chemistry, chemical physics, the science and the practice of the mechanical arts, have advanced with wonderful rapidity, and even, as some believe, with a rapidity dangerous to the proper balance of national acquirements: leading us to dwell overmuch on material progress, and to neglect or despise the theoretical, moral, and political science of our fathers.

I have given some examples of English philosophical works, overlooked or much neglected: I will now mention a work issued with a certain authority, and which attracted so little attention, that certain gross mistakes were near escaping censure. The present Cambridge Professor of Political Economy, rather recently published a Manual on his subject, and this reached a second edition. Both editions contained amazing assertions, as to which I elsewhere published the following remarks.

“Mr. Fawcett tells us that the agricultural population as a rule can neither read nor write: I prove that even in the worst paid agricultural counties, three-fourths of the young men and women can write as well as read; and that it is in the northern manufacturing towns that the most disgraceful ignorance is found. He says that our educational grants are enormous: I show that whereas our annual grants are three-quarters of a million, the United

States spend, in proportion to population, six times as much.

He makes the astonishing assertion that Irish wages are about as high as English: I prove that they are very far lower: the fear therefore, which he expresses, lest England should be depopulated by a rush of our labourers to Ireland, is simply unfounded.

He says that the Rochdale Pioneers originated the coöperative movement: I show that they make no such claim for themselves; that they admit themselves to have followed the example long ago set by Robert Owen. He represents these Rochdale men as having only proposed to reduce the cost of groceries: I appeal to their name, and quote the words of their historian to establish the fact, that they aimed at no less than 'to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government.'

He is equally unfortunate in his history of industrial partnerships. M. Leclaire, the apostle of Louis Blanc's gospel, would not know his own portrait: for he is represented as so disgusted with the misconduct of his workmen as to be driven into this new organization; whereas in truth he had made a fortune, and wanting to retire from active management, made his celebrated experiment.

Mr. Fawcett says that since the adoption of free trade in corn 'an almost unexampled increase has taken place in our population: the Census tells us that since the adoption of free trade in corn, our rate of increase has diminished.

He says that 'in many districts one-half of the children belonging to the poorer classes die before they are five years old.' I reply that I have paid

particular attention to this question: that I have been unable to discover these districts; and that even in Liverpool, the worst commonly quoted, the deaths under five years old are far less than one-half.

Finally, as to the rate of interest which has formerly prevailed, he contradicts all the authorities, without adducing any authority for his contradiction. He says that a century ago the English Government could not borrow under 5 per cent.: I prove that in 1737 the English Government could have borrowed under 3 per cent.: and that the rate generally in the last century was about the same as that in the present century.”<sup>(87)</sup>

If the subject of Political Economy attracted a reasonable amount of attention in England, a Manual by a new Cambridge Professor would have had some readers besides the attendants on the lectures; and among these readers would have been found critics able and ready to expose in the periodicals these gross mistakes. Yet the volume was allowed to go into a second edition with these disfigurements unnoticed. Afterwards, it happened that I got both editions, and exposed the misstatements: the *Pall Mall Gazette* noticed my book, but other periodicals showed just as much interest in this discreditable exhibition of professorial ignorance, as they would have shown in a discussion of donkey-racing or croquet-playing; and not half as much interest as they would have shown in a discussion of horse-racing or cricket. What cared the public or their servants, for the grossest mistakes in Political Economy made by a professor and communicated to undergraduates?

I conclude that mental and political philosophy want recognition and stimulus more than history and natural science. I think that it would be well to deal with the most neglected subjects first, by offering honours to those who cultivate them. Afterwards when the system was fully established by experiment, let it be widened so as to include other topics. What these should be might be determined hereafter.

We may as well see however, for our guidance, what the French take up in their *Institute*. Let it always be remembered that this Institute bears the same relation to the *Academies*, that Cambridge University bears to Trinity, St. John's, Caius, and its other colleges; and that Oxford University bears to Christ Church, New College, Balliol, and its other colleges.

"The Institute is the name of the first learned society of France, established in Paris, and composed of five Academies, viz.: the French Academy, the Academy of inscriptions and belles-lettres, the Academy of sciences, the Academy of fine arts, and the Academy of moral and political science."<sup>(88)</sup>

Men may belong to other academies which are not included in the Institute; and for this reason the members of the five adopted academies often announce themselves as *de l'Institut*; though others prefer reminding their readers that they are *de l'Académie française*, or *de l'Académie des sciences*.<sup>(89)</sup>

*The Academy* is understood in England at least to mean the academy of literature; that is, *the French Academy*. It is common enough for lively writers who do not belong to this body, to make themselves merry with its pretensions.



The French Academy is “one of the five Academies which, together, form the body known as the Institute of France, but it differs from the other classes of the Institute in one respect. Whereas the sister academies of ‘Science,’ ‘Beaux Arts,’ ‘Sciences Morales et Politiques,’ and ‘Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres,’ are divided into sections, to each of which a separate portion of work—such as it is—is confided, the Académie française remains one and indivisible. The forty members—critics, historians, novelists, poets, orators, and nobodies—are all supposed to work together. The fact is they have nothing to do, and they do it. There exists, it is true, a ‘Dictionnaire de l’Académie,’ the collective production of that illustrious body—a very good work in its way, which has been unduly criticised—but the last edition of it, if I mistake not, was published in 1835, and as it is confined to words in present use, it has become insufficient. Words which might fairly be classed under the head of neologisms five-and-thirty years ago, are now freely used by the most scrupulous of Academicians. There is also a stupendous work in hand, on which the Academy is supposed to be perpetually engaged—the ‘Dictionnaire Historique,’ the object of which, as the title indicates, is to trace back into the remotest part every word of the language, and to relate its vicissitudes and variations, illustrating them by numerous examples. The idea originated with Charles Nodier, and a first part, comprising 368 pages, was published in 1858. You will understand how very small that instalment was when I add that the dictionary, if completed on the same scale, would

extend over 76,000 pages, or eighty thick volumes. A grand work certainly!—with but one drawback; it does not exist.”<sup>(90)</sup>

This peculiar Academy has obtained a factitious importance; partly by the ostentatious reception of new members.

“I cannot undertake an account of the labours of the Academy in the past: in the present day they consist in *the awarding of numberless prizes* and in public speech-making. Those academical speeches which now attract all Paris had very humble beginnings. A newly-elected member on taking his seat would address a few words of thanks to his colleagues, and in return would receive a concise welcome from the President: naturally enough, he brought a few friends with him to witness his installation: after a while it was admitted that some of those friends might be ladies, and this was the foundation of the brilliant assemblies we now see. With the public, and a public of ladies especially, grew the wish to please, and from thence the elaborate speeches which constitute at present the whole life of the Academy.”<sup>(91)</sup>

The writer of this diatribe, in saying that making speeches constitutes the whole life of the Academy, overlooked one of his statements above, that the awarding of numberless prizes constitutes another part of that life. If he had ever himself had the laborious duty of awarding prizes, and therefore of reading the manuscript volumes sent in for competition, he would have conjectured that this part of the Academy's life was far more weighty than that of the speech-making. The members are forty in

number: of these, many are old men, some are busy men, others are, no doubt, incapable men: the workers must have a good deal to do in awarding numberless prizes.

But let us see what is said by different and graver writers as to the other departments of the Institute.

The Academy of Sciences was founded long before our Royal Society. It flourished until the revolution of '89, and even till 1792, when it evaded propositions to expel the royalist members, and consequently the body was dissolved by the Assembly. Three years afterwards however, it was reconstituted.

“In 1795, the Directory organized the Institute of France, divided into five classes, of which the four first corresponded with the former academies, while the fifth, newly founded, comprised moral and political science. The Academy of Science became the first class of the Institute. Under this new form, it hastened to restore the succession which the violence of the times had interrupted for an instant; and it staked its honour on renewing all the traditions of the ancient company, which for a century and a half *had taken so considerable a part in the general movement of science.*”<sup>(92)</sup>

This passage was written by M. Edgar Saveney, not a member of the Institute: the next was written by the well-known M. Louis Reybaud, a member.

“Of all the influences which have contributed to this manufacturing reform, none is more palpable or more active than that of the Institute. No sooner was the Academy of moral and political science reëstablished, in 1832, in the domain from which

the first empire had exiled it, than it took up these questions with an authority which has never since failed it; and intrusted to many of its members tasks which have left dates in the history of statistics and political economy, as well as in that of penitentiary reform."

These specimens of the work of the Academies may convince us that the Institute, (the University of which the Academies are the Colleges) is a highly important institution. We see that it gives a direct stimulus to most or all of the highest studies: to literature generally, to poetry and history, to natural science, to the fine arts, to moral and political science.

It might turn out desirable in the end, to make an Order of Merit embrace all these studies: perhaps in five such branches; just as the Order of the Bath has its two branches, the military and the civil.

But at first it would be well to make the experiment on the mostly neglected studies; those of moral and political science; or as I have previously called them, mental and political philosophy.

## XI.

I PUT forth this scheme, with my eyes wide open to the fact, that in doing so I invite the shafts of obvious and vulgar satire.

You have yourself written on political philosophy, will say the cheap wit: your books find few readers: you persuade yourself that they are unsold because political philosophy is neglected; but perhaps if you inquired candidly, you would find that your books



are unread because they are not worth reading. The cheap wit may be right: yet an Order might none the less be advantageous.

Do you know, another will say, what would be one of the first results of such an examination as you desire? It would be a disastrous result to many writers. Of twenty who competed, one would be chosen, and another would be a *proxime accessit*: the eighteen would be snuffed out. Suppose you found yourself among the extinguished: you the author of the scheme: such a misfortune might happen. This lively critic might be right also; except in rashly assuming the probability of the scheme being adopted within the few years I have to live. The truth is, that the notion of such an Order has been in my head these ten or fifteen years; and if I had absurdly proposed to myself as objects of ambition, to get an Order established and to become a member of it, I must have acted with unusual procrastination and singular folly, in postponing my proposals until they are too late to serve my monstrous folly.

That by such an institution many minor lights would be snuffed out, is true, and is even one of the benefits which would follow. A barrister of my acquaintance went a certain circuit a good part of his life: he was never known to have a second brief at any assize town: when he was forty, talking of his ill success, he said he could bide his time, and with patience he should get business. Any institution which would earlier have extinguished his hopes, would have performed a kindness for him. Many others too, would owe gratitude to an impar-

tial trial which would give an unfavourable verdict. You have mistaken your vocation, would be a declaration painful but profitable. A writer, however insipid and dull, must live in a very unsympathetic circle if he does not get his few readers and admirers: if he has good sense, which a dull man may have, he knows that such admiration is so diluted with kindness as to be nearly valueless: having no other critics however, he does not arrive at self-knowledge, but goes on wasting his time and money in helping to build up the vast rubbish-heap of the day.

A graver thinker, disdaining the cynicisms of the popular wit, might object that such an Order would stimulate very few persons; so few as to reduce the possible benefit to very small dimensions. This objection I think would be unfounded. No doubt, the number of members of the Order would be small: that of the French Academy, as we have seen, is forty; and if that of each of the other four Academies were the same, the members of the Institute would be two hundred. If we covered the same ground with the Academy: poetry, history, general literature, fine arts, natural science, moral and political science; and if we found two hundred members enough for our smaller population, that, I concede, would give but a member here and there throughout the three kingdoms. On the other hand, many would compete for the honour, but would fail to get it: more would prepare to compete, but would prematurely abandon the labour: just as at Cambridge, there is only one Senior Wrangler a year, but the hope of the honour stimulates dozens or scores of youths and their masters. And when-

ever the honours of the Order were conferred, there would be curiosity among the friends of the successful and of the unsuccessful: why was A preferred to B? The young, hearing these discussions, would be curious to know what these honour-giving topics were; and would early aspire to join in the struggle.

Another objector may tell me that I am justly desirous of distributing honours over the country, but that this scheme will fail to do it. I admit that it is difficult to achieve this distribution: I do feel also, that it is most desirable to have local centres, from each of which intellectual light may radiate. I grant that there is a tendency among authors to collect in the capital, for the sake of companionship and mental stimulus. I devoutly wish that the tendency could in this case be counteracted: I should be glad if it were possible to offer the honours of the Order in such a way that they should be divided among the three kingdoms: so that one-tenth of them should be held in Scotland; a sixth of them in Ireland; a certain proportion in Lancashire and the North; another proportion in the Midland Counties; another in the South-West. I confess however, that I cannot myself devise any plausible scheme for accomplishing this object. If any local functions, requiring residence, could be attached to the honour, the local distribution would be more easily realized.

It may be said again, that a fair examination of authors' works could not be got at first; since you could only appoint the men now living, and if these are unfair now they would be the same as examiners. It is obvious however, that the appointing a man to perform a certain function, altogether changes his

relation to other persons: the rather unscrupulous barrister, raised to the Bench, becomes an exact and severe Judge: the careless writer, called upon to give a public verdict, will exert himself to act justly. A young author at present sends a copy of his work to the best-known authorities: a Sir William Hamilton, a Thomas Tooke, will reply politely: most others say nothing. It is unfair to charge the latter with being contemptuous or grossly negligent: for popular authors are overpowered with attentions of this kind; and having probably no one to act as private secretary, they shrink from unnecessary and uninteresting correspondence. There may even be found authors so fastidious as to abstain from acknowledging presentation copies even to their acquaintance, fearing lest they should be betrayed into undeserved and insincere praise. I cannot admire such austere virtue: I even think this world would be hardly worth living in, if such repellent stoicism were general.

At any rate, from various causes, most authors of distinction are very backward in rendering justice to young and unknown brethren. A recent French author, after saying that Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood was soon recognized as true, adds that this is the only case within the writer's knowledge in which a great discoverer had justice done him in his lifetime: and even Harvey suffered much obloquy and injustice. But the case would be quite different if authors of distinction accepted the functions of judges; and controlled by their consciences, as well as subject to the severe criticism of the public and the press, read and considered the



works put before them, and pronounced a formal sentence.

It will be said that at the present moment certain men do act as judges, by writing articles in periodicals. They sometimes act as critics, I answer, not as judges. The articles are anonymous: often written by young or inferior men: subject to all the partialities of love or hatred, or of publishers' influence. Above all, reviewers are in no way bound to notice all the works that come out, nor even to select the best. I have shown in an early part of this essay, that a thinker highly praised in France, Germany, and America, may be denied all notice in our periodicals: that because the man is not liked, his genius is to be overlooked. Under the plan I propose, the best men would be appointed examiners: they would act under the eye of the public; they would have to pronounce on all the books submitted to them; they would not be permitted to turn aside to the consideration of an author's private characteristics.

I will not again refer to contemporary critics; but I will mention a case of seventy years ago, to show how a man of genius may be treated, in a publication of the highest character, and in an article written by a man afterwards very famous.

The publication I mean is the *Edinburgh Review*; and I must admit that at the time I mention, it had not reached that gravity which now distinguishes it. Most readers remember Sydney Smith's article about a sermon by Dr. Langford on the Royal Humane Society.

“An accident which happened to the gentleman

engaged in reviewing this sermon, proves, in the most striking manner, the importance of this charity for restoring to life persons in whom the vital power is suspended. He was discovered with Dr. Langford's discourse lying open before him, in a state of the most profound sleep; from which, he could not, by any means, be awakened for a great length of time. By attending, however, to the rules prescribed by the Humane Society, flinging in the smoke of tobacco, applying hot flannels, and carefully removing the discourse itself to a great distance, the critic was restored to his disconsolate brothers.

"The only account he could give of himself was, that he remembered reading on, regularly, till he came to the following pathetic description of a drowned tradesman; beyond which, he recollects nothing."<sup>(93)</sup>

A review which admitted articles written in this rollicking spirit must not be severely judged, even if it exhibited a levity scarcely becoming. But this forms no excuse for grave criticisms which are harsh or false, as in the following example.

"As this paper contains nothing which deserves the name, either of experiment or discovery, and as it is in fact destitute of every species of merit, we should have allowed it to pass among the multitude of those articles which must always find admittance into the collections of a Society which is pledged to publish two or three volumes every year. . . .

"The author of this paper introduced himself to the literary world by a few desultory remarks upon a theory, which he appeared to think new, but which had previously been exposed and refuted—

the muscularity of the chrystalline lens. Soon after this, he retracted his opinion; and a year or two ago he again brought it forward. We do not know whether or not he has once more abandoned it; but we seriously recommend to him a due reflection upon the fact in the history of his opinions, which we have just now stated. Let it teach him a becoming caution in the *publication* of his theories. A discovery in mathematics, or a successful induction of facts, when once completed, cannot be too soon given to the world. But as an hypothesis is a work of fancy, useless in science, and fit only for the amusement of a vacant hour . . . the inventor comes precisely under that description of persons to whom the Roman satirist uttered those memorable injunctions, *sæpe veritas stylum*, and *Nonum prematur in annum* . . . . .

“We take our leave of this paper, with recommending it to the Doctor to do that which he himself says would be very easy; namely, to invent various experiments upon this subject. As, however, the season is not favourable for optical observation, we recommend him to employ his winter months in reading the *Optics*, and some of the plainer parts of the *Principia*, and then to begin his experiments by repeating those which are to be found in the former of these works.”<sup>(94)</sup>

These dogmatic strictures were written by a lawyer of 25 years old: Henry Brougham,<sup>(95)</sup> who was afterwards, as a leading barrister, as a member of the House of Commons, and as a Peer, distinguished for oratorical power and for persistent devotion to law reform. At no period of his life however, did his

attainments authorize him to express an opinion on works of natural science.

The injustice is aggravated by absurdity, when we remember who was the author thus condemned. It was no less a person than Dr. Thomas Young; one of the most original thinkers of England: equally distinguished by his success in establishing the undulatory theory of light against the emanation theory of Newton, and his discoveries in Egyptian hieroglyphics in connection with the Rosetta stone.

“Not a year passes in which something newly brought to light does not require the examination of Young’s writings: it is frequently found that his hints are far from being exhausted. The points which should be most prominent in a general recapitulation, are the amount and variety of his knowledge, the remarkable manner in which he could make a small amount of mathematics go further than anybody else, his discoveries in Egyptian hieroglyphics, his theory of vision, his subversion of the Newtonian doctrine of light, and substitution of the undulatory hypothesis in its place.”<sup>(96)</sup>

And this is the man whom a youthful advocate could anonymously abuse, and of whose paper on the theory of light and colours, he could say that it contained nothing which deserved the name of experiment or discovery.

We can forgive Jeffrey, when in the same periodical he put forth strange opinions about poetry: when he sneered at Wordsworth and Coleridge; and showed that he preferred Crabbe’s *Village* to Scott’s *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, or *Gertrude of Wyoming* to the *Ancient Mariner*: differences of taste are excus-



able. But we cannot forgive the presumption of a young advocate, however distinguished in after life, who, possessing mere elementary knowledge of science, judged and condemned one of the most ingenious and profound of English savants.

Now I do not say that you can secure perfect justice, do what you will: an original thinker will commonly be condemned as whimsical, or over-refining, by those whose opinions have long been formed; and yet the examiners you appoint must be learned men. Genius, bold and original thought, will always find a difficulty in securing recognition. Take all possible pains in appointing your examiners, let them be selected partly by the Order, partly by experts outside the Order, and still you will have prejudices to deal with.

But you may approach much nearer to justice than you do now: your judges will not be ignorant of the topics before them: the prejudice of one may be counteracted by a different prejudice of another: the men will be known: they will act under a sense of responsibility: their decisions will be criticised. Dr. Thomas Young might not have succeeded in converting such judges to his theory of light: but he would have escaped the annoyance of having his paper condemned as containing "nothing which deserves the name either of experiment or discovery" and as "in fact destitute of every species of merit." To say that we cannot reach perfect justice is to say that we are human, and cannot summon angels from heaven as assessors or umpires. We boast of our courts of justice as among the glories of our country: we regard our judges as pure, learned, able, bent

on doing right. Comparing former times with the present, and other countries with our own, these praises are well deserved. Yet get into the company of able solicitors or equity barristers: hear their conversation about some case recently decided; and if you believe them, the Vice-Chancellor or the Master of the Rolls has been misled by ignorance or prejudice, or by too generous a desire to do substantial rather than technical justice. Yet we do not propose to revert to a patriarchal judicial administration, or to leave everything to the unfettered discretion of the Sovereign, or to the Mayor, or to local common sense. Let us also, in philosophy and literature, abandon the notion of leaving things to themselves; let us by formal organization approach as nearly as we can to just decisions, followed by suitable honours.

## XII.

SUCH a scheme would not have been tolerated by the last generation, among whom the doctrine of laissez-faire was at its zenith. During the wars with Napoleon, the minds of Englishmen were kept on the rack of anxiety, and were shut to all inferior considerations: the French revolutionary earthquake, the meteor greatness of Napoleon, the repeated fears of invasion, the grinding pressure of taxation, warped men from attention to social improvements.

After the conclusion of peace in 1815, though all persons living on fixed incomes were immediately relieved by the repeal of taxes and the fall of prices, yet landlords, capitalists, and workmen, all suffered

by the disturbance attending the passing into a condition of peace after twenty years of mortal contest. "War, their great customer, was dead:"<sup>(97)</sup> other and better customers were coming, but in the meantime there was stagnation and frightful distress. Landlords had to reduce their inflated rents; capitalists had to change their investments or to be content with a lower rate of profit; artisans had to live for a time with insufficient employment.

Under such circumstances, the doctrine of *laissez-faire* finds ready listeners. Government cannot generally do anything without incurring expense: but the great popular cry was for a diminished government outlay, and a reduced taxation. In truth, the taxation was heavy. The annual payment of the national debt was more by a fourth than it is now, though the population of Great Britain was about half: so that, taking into account our augmented wealth, we possibly might at present pay sixty millions a year more than our present interest on the debt, without greater pressure than weighed on our fathers after 1815.

Men so ground down, readily listened to those who told them, that though they could not dispense with army and navy, with police and courts of justice, yet government was only a necessary evil, and the less they had of it the better. The same doctrine finds supporters now; but the very men who preach it, run to Parliament to carry out at the public expense all kinds of benevolent schemes. The sole duties of government they say, are to protect us from foreign attack and domestic depredation; but we think it might pass a factory act,

limiting the women's and children's hours of work ; and after all the inspectors who carry out these laws may be regarded as a kind of policemen : it might improve the prisons, that being really part of the administration of justice : it might see to the proper treatment of lunatics, a mere police measure : it ought not to support a poor-law, which in itself is contrary to all sound principles ; and yet, as the abolition of it would cause rick-burnings, burglaries, riots, we must be content for the present to amend the law : it ought to leave education in the hands of parents, aided by private benevolence ; yet as these have failed, and as improvements in education would in the long run save half the expense of police and of courts of justice, the public may wisely spend a million a year on schools : it certainly ought not to meddle with the fine arts ; yet the necessity of maintaining and improving our manufactures, must excuse us if we lay out something in museums and art-teaching. Truly, if there are fictions of law and fictions of theology, there are also fictions of the art of government.

It is only gradually however, that we have learned the necessity of government interference in the education of all classes. Fifty years ago, the prevailing opinion among instructed and liberal men, was that the less government interfered with literature, the better it would be for the nation. This notion was brilliantly maintained in 1823 by Lord Macaulay, then entering on his career as a magnificent advocate of whatever opinions he adopted. Just before this time, the Royal Society of Literature had been established under the patronage of George IV.



It was Macaulay's pleasure to attack the society, and all societies for the promotion of literature, not excepting even the illustrious French Academy.

"The French Academy was the most illustrious assembly of the kind, and numbered among its associates men much more distinguished than ever will assemble at Mr. Hatchard's to rummage the box of the English Society. Yet this famous body gave a poetical prize, for which Voltaire was a candidate, to a fellow who wrote some verses about *the frozen and the burning pole*."

Macaulay even went out of his way to depreciate academies for promoting the fine arts. After saying that "it is in literature, that quackery is most easily puffed, and excellence most easily decried," he goes on :

"In some degree this argument applies to academies of the fine arts; and it is fully confirmed by all that I have ever heard of that institution which annually disfigures the walls of Somerset House with an acre of spoiled canvass."

Reading these passages now, they appear to be the wantonness of satire: yet I believe they only expressed the sentiments of the circle to which Macaulay belonged. The Whigs had been long excluded from office, and all power was odious to them: the society to be attacked had the especial patronage of George IV, and therefore was hateful.

"This is the age of societies. . . . To be the most absurd institution among the many institutions is no small distinction; it seems, however, to belong indisputably to the Royal Society of Literature."

But however mixed may have been the motives by which Macaulay was actuated, it is worth while to glance at the arguments brought forward, by one who knew better than anyone else how to state his case in a convincing form.

“I feel, and it is the duty of every literary man to feel, a strong jealousy of their proceedings. Their society can be innocent only while it continues to be despicable. Should they ever possess the power to encourage merit, they must also possess the power to depress it. Which power will be more frequently exercised, let every one who has studied literary history, let every one who has studied human nature, declare.”

“It is impossible that any society can be formed so impartial as to consider the literary character of an individual abstracted from the opinions which his writings inculcate. It is not to be hoped, perhaps it is not to be wished, that the feelings of the man should be so completely forgotten in the duties of the academician. The consequences are evident. The honours and censures of this star-chamber of the muses will be awarded according to the prejudices of the particular sect or faction which may at the time predominate. Whigs would canvass against a Southey, Tories against a Byron.”

“Yet even this is not the worst. Should the institution ever acquire any influence, it will afford most pernicious facilities to every malignant coward who may desire to blast a reputation which he envies. It will furnish a secure ambuscade, behind which the maroons of literature may take a certain and deadly aim.”

“One of the modes by which our Society proposes to encourage merit is the distribution of prizes. The munificence of the king has enabled it to offer an annual premium of a hundred guineas for the best essay in prose, and another of fifty guineas for the best poem, which may be transmitted to it. This is very laughable. . . . Granting that the prizes were always awarded to the best composition, that composition, I say without hesitation, will always be bad. A prize poem is like a prize sheep. The object of the competitor for the agricultural premium is to produce an animal fit, not to be eaten, but to be weighed. Accordingly he pampers his victim into morbid and unnatural fatness; and when it is in such a state that it would be sent away in disgust from any table, he offers it to the judges. The object of the poetical candidate, in like manner, is to produce, not a good poem, but a poem of that exact degree of frigidity or bombast which may appear to his censors to be correct or sublime.”<sup>(98)</sup>

This is amusing enough, but after all, it is satire and not exact truth. Macaulay himself in mature life, was no doubt, the first to condemn it. It is valuable however, as an outspoken exposition of the individualism of the liberal party at the time. Half a century has brought about a great change: we have learnt that in most departments of life coöperation has a high value; and that in many cases it is only by the aid of government that coöperation can be secured.

Few critics would now venture to describe our annual exhibitions of paintings, as acres of spoiled canvass: most thinkers agree that it is the pressing

duty of government to promote the fine arts by direct instruction, and by putting before the eyes of all, examples of great masters.

As regards the French Academy, it is strange that a youth of high culture, should have ventured to speak of it disrespectfully. That Academy had existed for two centuries: it had numbered among its members some of the greatest writers of Europe: if it had fallen into abeyance during the Revolution, its restoration a few years later, was a striking proof that the want of it was felt, and that it had a real and permanent value; and the establishment of other academies by its side showed that the French philosophers and men of science recognized the services which academies could render.

In England indeed, we have no such academies, and I have endeavoured in this essay to show what would probably suit us better as a substitute for them. The Royal Society of Literature has survived Macaulay's attack, and after fifty years' existence may smile at his petulance. If it has not become very powerful for good, it has been useful in proportion to the smallness of its means. It certainly is not despicable, and yet no one now feels that "it is the duty of every literary man to feel a strong jealousy" of its proceedings: nor can it be alleged that it affords "most pernicious facilities to every malignant coward who may desire to blast a reputation which he envies."

As to the practice of offering money prizes I say nothing, but that as other nations have continued it, we may presume that they have found it useful. One blot Macaulay does seem to have hit; I mean the



imperfection inevitably attending the self-election (or coöptation) of academies. If a chemist has discovered a new metal by laborious and persevering efforts, he ought to have the reward of his industry and ingenuity, even though his theological or political opinions are offensive and his manners are ungainly : a writer highly distinguished for works on mental and social science, ought not to be denied the honorary rewards of universities, because he does not share the national faith ; and especially if he has exhibited a considerate and reverential temper, by abstaining from contemptuous sneers at what he regards as weakness and superstition. But the members of an academy are apt to take the opinions and the manners into account.

An illustration has lately occurred, and the case is one in which it is difficult to award blame. Soon after M. Émile Ollivier became Premier early in 1870, the French Academy elected him a member. This was a compliment to the Emperor's growing liberalism ; but as M. Ollivier was personally a man of considerable distinction, no one could find much fault with the election. It is a remarkable fact however, that from the day of the *coup d'état* until M. Ollivier's ministry, a period of 18 years, the Academy had absolutely refused to elect any one of Louis Napoleon's ministers ; although some of the members, like St. Beuve, had conformed to the Second Empire. Instead of blaming the Academy, I much admire the patriotism which protested against the usurpation of the crowned democrat : but I feel that it would be much better if honorary rewards were bestowed at all times without reference to political

or religious opinions; since I see no more fairness in depriving of such deserved honours, an author of unpopular opinions, than there would be in refusing the place of Senior Wrangler to a Jew.

The scheme which I have proposed in this essay, is framed with the view of securing that fairness and independence which I desire: I think it probable that its adoption would do a great deal towards bringing Great Britain into its due position in the world of philosophy; towards making our nation as distinguished in moral and social science as it is already in industry, commerce, and politics: I hope that it would raise a dyke against the flood of sensuality and fashionable follies and vice, which a long peace and excessive prosperity have engendered; that by asserting, in a way intelligible to all, the merits of disinterested mental labour, it would put to shame the impertinent follies of the ignorant butterflies who can see only the outside of men, and would compel them to recognize outwardly at least, the superiority of intellectual labour as compared with idleness and sensuality.

## XIII.

IN a few words then, my proposal is as follows.

That an Order should be established, for the encouragement of philosophical and literary merit.

That all elections to it should take place in a prescribed way; not one being made by court favour or by political influence.

That the merit of candidates should be judged of

by their published works alone : a decided preference being given to originality.

That candidates should probably be invited to produce the printed opinions of critics, on their books.

That at the first election, nothing more shall be demanded : but that at future elections, to prevent the fraudulent presentation of works not written by the nominal author, every candidate should be required to write an essay in the presence of the examiners ; such essay to be a mere preliminary, proving his capacity to write the works he presents, and not to be the test of his merit. The essays of the successful candidates to be published, and (I think) such other essays as the respective writers of them may require.

That the mode of appointing the Examiners should not be determined till after full discussion : but that it should be to a considerable extent independent of the members of the Order ; the intention being that there should be nothing like self-election (or co-optation.)

That there should be three grades : that when the Order was fully established, every candidate should be required to pass through the lowest grade before he could stand for the second, and the second, before he could stand for the highest : that at first however, there should be an election at once to the highest grade.

That as a stimulus to further work, a member should not rise from one grade to another, till after an interval of seven or ten years.

That in the end, the Order might be conferred for merit in any of the subjects included in the circle

adopted by the French Institute: literature generally, poetry and history, natural science, the fine arts, moral and political science.

That at first, the Order should be limited to moral and political philosophy, rewards for which are at present the most urgently wanted.

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The principal ground on which I rest my scheme, is the fact that the present let-alone practice has so utterly failed, that, as Mr. Lewes tells us, an author who undertakes to instruct the public on mental or political philosophy, must do so at his own expense: and that while the demand for light literature has increased tenfold, books which require men to think, do not repay the cost of printing.

I have shown how such Orders were established by Frederick the Great and by Napoleon, and recently by Germany. I have pointed out that Jeremy Bentham, the founder of philosophical radicalism, recommended the Americans to found such an Order while avoiding hereditary titles: that his Swiss *ré-dacteur*, Dumont, maintained the fitness of rewarding public services by honours as well as by money.

Honours now awarded to literature and philosophy, I have said, are not understood or not appreciated. Fellows of the Royal Society, Honorary Doctors of Civil Law, go about the world unnoticed; and the titles so bestowed do nothing to impress on the minds of ordinary men, that grave thinkers are worthy to be ranked as leaders of the world.

An Order, it is clear, in its two highest grades, taking precedence of a mere city knighthood, having



that conventional value which is traditionally understood, would instruct men to class the highest educational services with civil and military services rendered to the nation.

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I need not recapitulate the replies which I have made to the frivolous objections of men who write only to raise a smile.

To sincere and serious objectors I grant that no scheme will secure artificial reward to high genius; to Bohemians such as Henry Heine, or despisers of authority such as Auguste Comte. It is one of the misfortunes of genius, that it is impossible to assemble an impartial tribunal capable of estimating its merits: Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, "is the only man, as far as I know, who has so far triumphed over envy, as during his lifetime to establish a new doctrine."<sup>(99)</sup>

But such genius is rare, and we may at any rate try to mitigate the injustice which attends it. A Commission of experts such as I recommend, would not be guilty of the cruel absurdity exhibited by the *Edinburgh* towards Dr. Thomas Young: if it failed to appreciate his theory, it would recognize the ability he displayed in supporting it: men selected for their fitness, and acting under the supervision of the public, would not venture on freaks of petulance, and by their verdict would close the mouths of anonymous critics.

But the main scope of the scheme would be different from this: it would be the calling out of such ability as can be developed by encouragement: of such

ability as is seen annually among the higher wranglers at Cambridge, and among the first-class men at Oxford or London. We want to give to such men a motive for using their extensive knowledge and their cultivated intellect in after life: we want to offer motives of exertion also, to that larger class who, with as much natural power as that of senior wranglers or senior classics, have wanted the advantages of university education.

## NOTES TO ESSAY I.

- (1) M. Guizot, quoted in Mill's Dissertations, ii. 282.
- (2) *Revue des deux Mondes*, lxxxii, 811, note 2.
- (3) Dictionnaire de l'Economie Politique, i. 647.
- (4) Dumont, *Théorie des Peines*, &c., 1811, ii. 96.
- (4A) Lamartine, *Cours familier*, 1861, Entr. 61. 462.
- (5) Dupont White, *L'Individu et l'Etat*, 2d edn. 1858, 150.
- (6) Michel Chevalier, *Cours de l'Econ. Pol.* 1855, i. 57-8.
- (7) It is proved, I believe, that it was not Napoleon who said this.
- (8) *Pall Mall Gazette*, 28 April, 1870. The drawing lots was afterwards contradicted.
- (9) *Ib.*, 25 March, 1870.
- (10) *Rev. d. d. Mondes*, lxvi. 19.
- (11) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 11 Sept. 1867.
- (12) *Economist*, 12 Nov., 1864. 1398.
- (13) *Saturday Review*, 17 Nov., 1860.
- (14) Mill's Dissertations, ii. 54.
- (15) Grattan, *Civilized America*, i. 72.
- (16) *Social Science Transactions*, ii. 364.
- (17) Hare, *Election of Representatives*, 1861, 232.
- (19) Langhorne's *Plutarch*, i. 175.
- (20) *Westminster Review*, xxiv. 199.
- (21) *Macmillan's Magazine*, April, 1860.
- (22) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 16 Jan., 1868.
- (23) Buckle, 3d edn., i. 218-219.
- (24) Mill, *Dissertations*, ii. 220.
- (25) Cobden's M. Chevalier on value of gold, 1859, 10, note.
- (26) *Journal des Economistes*, August, 1862.
- (26A) *Quarterly Rev.*, April, 1837, 303.
- (27) *The Bookseller*, 24 Feb., 1859.
- (28) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 5 May, 1866.
- (29) *Fortnightly Review*, v. 245.
- (30) *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1863, 161.
- (31) *Rev. d. d. Mondes*, lxxxvi. 299.
- (32) *Ib.*, 298.
- (33) *Birmingham Daily Post*, 14 May, 1870.
- (34) *Statistical Journal*, xxvi. 210.
- (35) *Economist*, 14 May, 1870, 595-6.
- (36) Corbon, *le Secret du Peuple de Paris*, 2d edn., 1865, 43.
- (37) *Penny Cyclopædia*, art. D. Hume.
- (38) Turgot, edn., 1844, ii. 797.
- (39) Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*. (originally "the garret and the jail")
- (39A) *Quarterly Review*, Feb., 1837. 115.
- (40) *Fraser's Mag.*, May, 1858.
- (41) *Saturday Rev.*, 12 June, 1858. 616.
- (42) *The art of sinking in poetry*. Pope's Works, 1757, vi. 196.
- (43) Franklin's Works, edn. 1818, i. 335. "Eripuit cælo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis."
- (44) Sir W. Temple's *United Provinces*, i. 61.
- (45) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 10 Nov., 1869.
- (46) Bentham's Works, x. 406. 2.
- (47) Mackintosh, *Dissertation*, Preface, 45.
- (48) Mill, *Dissertations*, i. 96.
- (49) *Ib.*, i. 184.
- (50) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 17 May, 1867, pa. 8.
- (51) *Literary Gaz.*, 29 Sept., 1860.
- (52) *Fortnightly Rev.*, 1 March, 1869. 263-4.
- (53) *Rev. d. d. Mondes*, lxxiv, 341.
- (54) *Ib.*, 1856, i. 460.
- (55) *L. and Westminster Rev.* April, 1839, 19.
- (56) Dupont White, *L'Individu et l'Etat*, 259.
- (56A) Babbage, *Economy of Manuf.* 3d edn., 1833, 384.
- (57) Dumont, *Théorie des Peines*, &c., 1811, ii. 6 and ii. 67-8. ii. 131.
- (58) *Ib.*, ii. 99.
- (59) *Saturday Rev.*, 2 May, 1863, 554-5.
- (60) *Politique Positive*, i. 200.
- (61) Clarkson, *History Abolition Slave Trade*, 1808, i. 205.
- (62) *Ib.*, 208.
- (63) *Ib.*, 210.
- (64) *Journal des Econ.* July, 1869, 111.
- (65) *Pall Mall*, 6 Feb., 1866. 2.
- (66) *Cornhill Mag.* May, 1860, 633.
- (67) Carlyle, *Friedrich II*, iii. 8.
- (68) *Œuvres de Napoléon III*, i, 91-2.
- (69) *Times*, 2 Sept., 1861, "Turin."
- (70) *Pall Mall Gaz.*
- (71) Dumont, *Théorie des Peines*, &c. 1811, ii. 7.
- (72) Bentham, xi. 100, note 2.
- (73) *Dict. de l'Econ. Pol.* 1854, ii. 281.
- (74) Buckle, 3d edn., i. 646.
- (75) Babbage, 147. *Saturday Rev.*, 16 Jan., 1864.
- (76) Clay, *Prison Chaplain*, 108.
- (77) Babbage, 479.
- (78) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 27 Jan., 1869. 4.
- (78A) *Journal des Econ.* Sept., 1869, 422.
- (78B) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 3d Aug. and 10 Aug., 1870.
- (79) Buckle, 3d edn. i. 626.
- (80) *Ib.*, i. 646.
- (81) *Revue d. d. Mondes*, lxxvii. 41.
- (82) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 11 Dec., 1867.
- (84) *Statistical Jour.* xxv. 77.
- (85) *Dict. de l'Econ. Pol.* 1854, ii, 281.
- (86) *Saturday Rev.* 27 July, 1861, 100.
- (87) "Recent Pol. Econ." viii.
- (88) *Dict. de l'Académie française*
- (89) *Revue d. d. Mondes*, lxxxv, 1st Feb. Art. ii, and 15 Jan., arts. iii and vi.
- (90) *Pall Mall Gaz.*, 10 May, 1869, 9.
- (91) *Ib.*
- (92) *Revue d. d. Mondes*, lxxxiv. 226.
- (93) *Edinburgh Rev.* i. 113.
- (94) *Ib.*, i. 450.
- (95) *Quarterly Rev.*, cxvi, 302, note. The same note denies that Lord Brougham wrote the caustic article on Byron's Hours of Idleness.
- (96) *Penny Cyclopædia*.
- (97) Robert Owen.
- (98) Macaulay, *Miscellaneous Writings*, 1860, 23.
- (99) *Revue des deux Mondes*, lxxxviii. 173.

## Essay II.

### THE PRINCESS AND HER DOWRY.

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#### I.

MUCH irritation, some alarm, serious annoyance, have been caused by the grant to the Princess Louise, on her marriage with the Marquis of Lorne. The working-class electors have been angry; the London writers of articles, personally unacquainted with that class, have imagined an imminent revolution: unfortunate members of parliament, pledged to economy but convinced of the propriety of the grant, have had a hard struggle to reconcile the safety of their seats with their sense of right.

The Princess and her lord have got the dowry. But a ministry will hesitate before proposing another such grant. It will be felt dangerous to repeat such a strain on the monarchy.

Even this dowry though granted, and other royal and princely annuities hitherto paid, are not quite safe for the future. Some small but ambitious



political party, may take up as a hustings cry: down with dowries. Who will prophesy its success or failure?

Is there no way out of this discreditable dispute? this haggling about an annual sum which is less than a ten thousandth part of each year's national expenditure; and which bears the same relation to the income of the country that ten shillings a year bear to a private income of £5,000 or £6,000?

I believe there is a way out of it: a way simple and straight: a way just in itself and politically expedient: a way sure of smoothing down the present irritation, of relieving the distressing agitation of publicists, of making the hearts of liberal members leap for joy.

## II.

THE grant proposed and since carried in both Houses, is one of £30,000 dower, and a life annuity of £6,000. The charge brought upon each elector by this grant is very small, as compared with the whole taxation of the country. We may say that in round numbers we pay a tenth part of our income to the government: to the government and the local authorities together, an eighth part of our income: so that a mechanic earning £80 a year, pays to the general government £8 a year, to all the authorities together £10 a year. Now the addition of £30,000 in one year, would bring upon such a man a charge of one ten-thousandth part of the £8: that is less than a farthing: the annuity of £6,000 would bring upon him a charge less than one farthing every five years.

A penny a year would go a long way in paying his share of all such grants taken together.

I have said that £6,000 a year is less than one ten-thousandth part of the whole expenditure of the nation, and bears the same relation to it that ten shillings a year bear to a private income of £5,000. We might perhaps look contemptuously at a private gentleman having the noble income of £5,000, who was litigious about a demand upon him for ten shillings. Yet there are plenty of examples in our courts, of wealthy men who have resisted a demand for a sum less than ten shillings, and who have risked hundreds of pounds in the process.

We should be quite wrong to say that such a man was mean: the mean man would often pay ten shillings rather than go to law: it is in many cases a liberality of mind that urges a wealthy person to resist a trifling claim on the ground of principle. A landowner may refuse to pay a *modus* to a rich clergyman, just as Hampden refused to contribute to shipmoney: not for his own personal advantage, but for the protection of the community.

### III.

LET us try to make out what is at the bottom of the popular agitation: why it is that denunciations of the grant are cheered to the echo, while constituencies will scarcely allow a hearing to the most popular members who defend it.

According to an anonymous writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, republicanism is the source of the movement.<sup>(1)</sup> The working men, he says, "still believe

kings and queens to be despots, while they conceive Republics to be the nursing-mothers of liberty. The simple creed of Garibaldi is theirs. There is neither virtue, nor manliness, nor economy, save in Republics."

I may venture to point out that a journal written by cultivated men, as the *Pall Mall* unquestionably is, should not use the word Republic loosely, as though it necessarily meant a democratic republic. Athens was administered as a republic; so was Rome: but the two governments were very different. Many of us have been brought up in the belief that from the revolution of 1688 to the reform bill of 1832, the English government was nominally a monarchy but really an aristocratic republic: that since 1832, it has tended steadily to become a democratic republic, limited and restrained by tradition and by the social influences of rank and wealth.

Let me also compare the theories of the *Pall Mall* and of *Reynolds* as to the causes of the prevalent democratic ideas. According to the *Pall Mall*, the working classes believe that monarchs are despots, that republics are the nursing-mothers of liberty, and that there is neither virtue, nor manliness, nor economy, save in republics. That these are the distinct opinions of Garibaldi and his admirers may be readily admitted.

But *Reynolds* gives a very different account of the causes of the progress of English democratic sentiment. He says it is not difficult to trace these causes. "For more than four years," (that is since the collapse of prosperity in 1866) "the people of England have endured the horrors of restricted

trade, bad wages, limited food, penury, and starvation. All this time the people have been told that the country was prosperous, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to extract the usual amount of plunder in the form of indirect taxation from unhappy consumers, who were not permitted to eat and drink till they had poured some part of their small earnings into the coffers of the Customs or the Excise."

*Reynolds* would probably say that the people do believe in democracy as the best security for manliness and virtue. But he distinctly says that the opposition to the grant springs out of less abstract considerations. "With empty cupboards at home, no wages to receive at the end of the week, and no prospect of improvement, the artisan was asked to listen to proposals in a slavish House of Commons to endow a princess with £30,000 and £6,000 a year for life; and there is a young prince ready to take twice as much because he is of age on the 1st of May next."

It is useless to reply to a working man urging this argument, that these grants are but a penny a year out of his pocket. He will answer you that he cannot follow your calculations: that even if they are correct, he does not see why that penny should be taken out of the poor man's pocket for the advantage of the rich. He may allude to Nathan's parable of the tyrannical chief who when a stranger came to his tent, spared to take of his own flocks and of his own herds, but seized the pet lamb of the poor man; the artisan may say to him who takes the poor man's pence;—thou art the man.



## IV.

LET us now look at the arguments used in favour of the grant; arguments which must certainly possess great weight, since we find liberal members facing popular constituencies, and risking their seats in declaring their resolution to vote with the ministry.

Let us consult the *Daily News*, the chief organ of the liberal party.<sup>(3)</sup> The editor fairly states the case in defence of the "Queen's Pay," as some working man had called it: that is, in defence of the incomes allowed to the Queen and her children.

He tells us that on the accession of Her Majesty, the first statute passed, assigned £385,000 a year "for the maintenance of the Queen's household, and the honour and dignity of the crown." Besides this sum, she has as Duchess of Lancaster, some £26,000 a year. On the other hand, she has to expend more than half this latter sum for "Royal bounty, alms, and special services," and for certain pensions.

Secondly, it appears that the Queen's income is less than that of her predecessors for the last 170 years: less, that is, in actual amount; and far less if we estimate it by comparison with the incomes formerly and now enjoyed by Her Majesty's subjects. In fact, our monarch's income is less than it was formerly, while our incomes have doubled or quadrupled.

Not only so, but the Queen has not called on the nation to pay debts carelessly or wilfully accumulated. Other sovereigns did this. Queen Anne, though she had a provision of £800,000 a year, had

to call on Parliament to pay her creditors nearly a million and a quarter. George I, who reigned one year longer than Queen Anne, incurred debts of a million. George II's deficiencies were less than half a million. George III's was a long reign and his over-expenditure was large; for though his Civil List, which began at £800,000 was increased to £900,000, to £960,000, and at last to more than a million, yet Parliament had to pay for him altogether nearly four millions.

Neither George IV nor William IV ran into debt; but we cannot forget that the former, as Prince of Wales, found himself so distressed, that he married against his will on condition that Parliament would satisfy his creditors. His marriage was as unhappy as mercenary matches are apt to be. The *Tory Quarterly Review* did not spare his memory.<sup>(4)</sup> After saying that the Prince was warned by a near relative of the unfitness of the Princess to be his wife, the *Quarterly* goes on—"So that he had no one to blame but himself. We are sorry to be obliged to add, that it seems as if his chief object in marrying was to get his debts paid; and, acting on so low a principle, he was very likely to take, on very slight and inadequate grounds, a personal disgust. The disgust certainly existed—but we see that before any such feeling could have been excited, the inexcusable indecency of placing in the first attendance on the Princess the very last lady in England who ought to have been brought to her notice, had been already committed."

With the exception then of William IV, all our Queen's predecessors for 170 years have run into

debt. Under the wise advice and influence of the late Prince Consort, the Queen introduced such order and economy into her palaces, that she has escaped this humiliation, has brought up her nine children, and has even saved enough to purchase and build the Osborne estate and house.

But if these are reasons why the nation should provide for the Queen's children as they come of age or marry, there is a still stronger reason, the one which has no doubt weighed so heavily on liberal members as to induce them to face the wrath of their constituents. This irresistible reason is that of justice. The Queen, it is true, receives nearly £400,000 a year out of the taxes, as a means of maintaining her household and supporting the honour and dignity of the Crown. But on the other hand, she surrenders to the nation for her life, the revenues of the estates which have descended to her; and these revenues, it appears, are *more* than the sums she receives. For myself, knowing the tricks that are played with figures, and seeing that there is here taken into account only the Queen's £385,000, and not the allowances to other branches of the royal family, I may regard the argument as pressed too far. But it must be conceded at least, that the excess which Her Majesty and her family receive beyond her hereditary revenues is very small. It is said also that if the Queen and the nation agreed to cancel their bargain, and to leave the Queen to her hereditary revenues, she might immensely increase these by letting for building the Parks in and around London, just as the Marquis of Westminster and the Duke of Bedford have done with their great estates.

But granting all this to be true, is the provision made for the Princess Louise a reasonable one? Mr. Gladstone told the House of Commons<sup>(5)</sup> that it is far less than the allowances made for the Princesses of the last century, making no allowance for the present increased habits of expense. George III's daughter the Princess Augusta, had an annuity of £15,000: of the other Princesses, Elizabeth had £14,000 a year; Sophia had £13,000, and Mary had £14,000, besides an annuity of the same amount to her husband the Duke of Gloucester.

Such are the facts brought forward in defence of the grant. We are assured that the annuity is far smaller than that given to the daughters of George III; that the Queen's power of herself granting the annuity is less than that of previous sovereigns; that Her Majesty has a strong claim on the nation in consequence of the frugality and good management, by which she has escaped the humiliation of being compelled to apply to Parliament to pay her debts. Finally, we learn that the claim is one of mere justice: inasmuch as the Queen, on her accession, surrendered to the nation for her life nearly all her hereditary revenues, which now amount to nearly as much as she and her family receive, and which would be vastly increased if the royal parks, instead of being kept open for the recreation of the people, were built upon as are the London estates of the high nobles.

Few disinterested persons will dispute the inference, that the Queen's children are entitled to such allowances as are actually made to them: nor will such persons pronounce it reasonable that these allowances should come out of the Queen's income;



which, for a monarch filling an ancient throne, representing a rich and prosperous people, and living among a very wealthy nobility, is in fact singularly moderate.

Notwithstanding all these considerations however, I am convinced that it is impolitic to take royal annuities out of the general national fund raised by taxation. By so taking it, there is left open for popular declamation a topic which is injurious to the stability of our institutions. A conviction will gradually be formed in the minds of multitudes of voters, that there is on the part of their rulers an insensibility to their distresses, and a tyrannical inclination to spare their own flocks and their own herds and to take rather the poor man's lamb.

## v.

**B**UT though the facts of the case have left this persuasion on my mind, it may be that more general considerations may alter it. Mr. Gladstone, after recapitulating the facts to the House of Commons, ended with saying that:—<sup>(6)</sup>

“The competent support—not the lavish and extravagant, but the competent and becoming support of the Crown and Royal Family, is an important part of our political system. It is not the money paid back from the Crown lands into the Exchequer that forms the equivalent. That equivalent is the political benefit and blessing that we enjoy. We have not far to look to learn how difficult it is to bestow upon democratic and popular forms of government the elements of stability, and how difficult it is to

root monarchical forms of government in the affections of a nation. And when we see how instability of succession places dynasties in this position—that the policy of a country becomes subservient to the interests of a family, and that questions of peace or war, if pursued to their first causes, may be too often referable to considerations of what would be popular or what would be unpopular, in reference to particular families, I trust that this House, acting with that wisdom which guides it upon every great constitutional question, will see that we should commit the grossest of all errors, if we were to enter into minute pecuniary calculations upon a subject of this nature.”

We must all agree with Mr. Gladstone that the question is not one to be decided by close calculations of farthings. It may be that the Queen, since her grievous loss of the Prince Consort, has failed a little in the performance of her public duties : that she has become too much of the recluse : that she has several times hindered the public business by retiring to Osborne, or even to Balmoral, at periods when her personal influence or her formal sanction was wanted : that she has treated the crown as her private possession rather than as a public trust : that she has not quite earned her pay : that she has shown herself human and therefore imperfect. The fact remains that in this sea-girt country, we have been free from those invasions which during this century have afflicted other nations, and we have enjoyed a government at once progressive and orderly. It would be madness for us to risk such happiness for the sake of saving a thousandth part of our national expenditure.

This is an excellent reason why we should retain our present form of government, even if we believe that we might retain the substance without the form: for why should we run the slightest risk on a matter of such vital importance? But do we not run this very risk by insisting on taking these dowries out of the general national purse? Do we not lay ourselves open to misunderstanding on the part of the multitude, and to the attacks of inflammatory declaimers?

We must remember that admirable as is our constitution, careful as is our administration, tender as is our care for the erring and the miserable, there are still crowds of people who do not know what happiness is: who are born to rags and die paupers. The world is not their friend, nor the world's law. It is vain to preach on the excellence of our constitution, to lean apothecaries, with famine in their cheeks, and on whose back hangs ragged misery. Stump orators have an easy bargain of such men when they tell them that they are called on to contribute even a penny loaf towards the pomp and gorgeousness of royalty. It is useless to talk to them of hereditary revenues and contracts of the 1st of Victoria: they reply that all you tell them may be lies, and that if you tell them truth, they will not consent to pay more taxes.

We arrive once more at the same dilemma. The Queen is entitled to have her Civil List, and to see her children dowered: but to take the dowries out of the general income of the country, brings dissatisfaction and political discontent.

## VI.

THERE is another danger. The ground on which monarchy rests is to some extent mined, and a spark would imperil its existence.

There was a time when the throne was secure in the convictions of educated men. The monarch was held to have the same right of inheritance to his kingdom that the noble had to his estate: a good queen commanded the affections of her subjects; who loved the mistress even more than they valued the institution. But the case is not so now.

I have already quoted the *Pall Mall*, as attributing to artisans the simple creed of Garibaldi, that virtue and manliness and economy are to be found nowhere but in Republics. I objected to this opinion that the great organ of that class appeals to a sentiment far simpler than Garibaldi's: to the desire of self-preservation and well-being. It complains that after four years of want and suffering, the destitute are insulted by a requisition to contribute their pence towards the dowry of a Princess.

Another writer in the *Pall Mall* however,<sup>(7)</sup> seems to me perhaps more nearly correct, when he says that republicanism is taking the place of attachment to monarchy among many of the richer classes. The writer; after pouring out the vial of his wrath upon the Comtists, as having "a spirit as reckless, as cold-blooded, as well leavened with political hate, as unscrupulous in the machinations of turbulence, as ever possessed the revolutionaries of any age or nation;" goes on to say that besides this small



political sect, there exist “a largely increasing number of well educated, well trained, active-minded young men, who are eager democrats, republicans, revolutionists.”

I can neither deny nor affirm this allegation. Young men are commonly eager, and if they hold the alleged opinions, no doubt they express them eagerly. It is natural however, that I should be better acquainted with the opinions of men who are no longer young. Among such men I find many who are quite indifferent, or even hostile, to monarchy in itself, as a thing of the past : a thing to be tolerated because it exists and has a traditional hold on the imaginations of the people ; but which is at the best useless in itself and perhaps noxious as well as absurd.

We who hold such opinions, read a Queen’s Speech as a ridiculous composition, borne with only from habit. We understand that a Queen Elizabeth meant something when she addressed her faithful Commons : but it moves our laughter to find a limited and constitutional Queen, who reigns but does not govern, who fills the throne for the purpose of keeping pretenders out of it, speaking thus to the assembled Houses :

“At an epoch of such moment to the future fortunes of Europe, *I am especially desirous* to avail myself of your counsels.

At the time when you separated, *I promised a constant attention* to the subject of neutral obligations ; *and I undertook* to use my best endeavours to prevent the enlargement of the area of the war . .

In accordance with the first of these declarations,

*I have maintained* the rights and strictly discharged the duties of neutrality.”

The following expression comes reasonably, as expressing a reality. “I have offered my congratulations” (to the new Emperor of Germany) “on an event which bears testimony to the solidity and independence of Germany.” . . . .

But the absurdity reappears immediately. “*I have endeavoured*, in correspondence with other Powers of Europe, to uphold the sanctity of Treaties.” . . . .

We are accustomed to this form of speech, which makes the Queen’s *I* represent the government of the country. Some persons, enamoured of what is old, even delight in the form, as exhibiting the tradition of the constitution. The form is a fiction, and we have many other fictions. There are fictions of law, which are said to often arise, when the Courts of Justice are in advance of the legislature, and endeavour to obviate by subtle distinctions the absurdity and injustice of the common or statute law. All men however, except the Dryasdusts, rejoice when the fictions are got rid of by new and improved statutes. There are fictions in theology, as for example where a man declares his assent and consent to the XXXIX articles, and at the same time maintains that he is not bound to believe them all. Most of us hold that such casuistry is dishonest, and some of us think that no one ought to be asked for more than a declaration that he will teach nothing contrary to the articles or inconsistent with them.

I say the same of the Queen’s “*I* :” it ought to be got rid of. How, when, and with what substitute, I am not statesman enough to pronounce.

A very sober weekly paper lately made another suggestion: that it was an unreasonable thing to make the validity of important national documents depend on the Queen's autograph; and that to prevent trouble and inconvenience, it would be desirable that Her Majesty should have a sign manual in the hands of a commission in London, whenever she was at Osborne or Balmoral. But if so, why not such a sign manual at all times? I remember reading in the Duc de Saint-Simon's long memoirs, that on his special embassy to Spain under the regency, he found a peculiar custom. The king was too idle to write his name, and had a stamp instead of a pen: it was too much trouble to keep the stamp himself, and he had a confidential officer who was his stamp-bearer. Our excellent monarch is more industrious.

All these discussions however, point to the conclusion that the monarchy is doomed. Educated men see that our government is really a republic: the fiction of a monarch cannot endure.

The very men who are most convinced of this, are at the same time the men most strongly opposed to sudden alterations. They it is who raise altars to Time the great Innovator. Their political motto is Evolution not Revolution. Disturb Her Majesty on the throne? They would as soon propose to restore the Star-Chamber and the pillory. The change will come soon enough. A profligate prince, setting public decency at defiance, might be sufficient. He would efface that traditional reverence for the monarch, which alone props up the throne. We deeply value that sentiment; but whenever it ceases to have a fit object, whenever another George

IV comes and stifles it, the dynasty is probably doomed.

## VII.

IT is much to be desired then, that the present constitution of Great Britain should be maintained; not as being in itself the best possible form of government, but as being that to which we are accustomed, and under which we have attained to a singular union of progress and order. When there arrives the time for the monarch to cease to be, we shall find ourselves in form as well as in reality a republic; a democratic republic, limited by the strong social influences of wealth and traditional rank. The crown will be consigned to a museum, the throne to a lumber-room: a Speaker, or President, or Premier, will be the elective head of the state. "Society," the Ten Thousand, will be dismayed for a day, and then ennui will resume her leaden reign over Belgravia. There will be no shifting of the centre of political power: the House of Commons will be predominant in the government as it is now. May the change be made peaceably, as peaceably as the much greater changes which have in forty years converted our aristocratic republic into a democratic republic!

In the mean time it is the clear duty of the Queen's ministers to postpone that inevitable revolution to the latest possible day. Who can say that it may not be postponed for generations, by looking the danger in the face and guarding against it?

But of all precautions, one of the most obvious



and one of the easiest I believe, is the abstaining in future from demands for dowries and grants to young princes. Let this source of irritation be dried up for ever.

Here then, is the dilemma once more. The Queen, having surrendered her hereditary revenues, and having tacitly pledged the crown not to turn to building purposes her metropolitan parks, is entitled to her Civil List, and to national assistance in providing for her children as they grow up. The Civil List at present is not grudged. But to take the subsequent allowances out of the general income of the nation is felt as a popular grievance. Whence then, can they come?

The reply to this question seems to me easy enough; though as it involves a new principle in taxation, I am not sanguine enough to expect many persons to accept it as solving the problem.

What I propose is that a special fund should be raised, by means other than those general taxes to which the working-classes contribute. The artisan and the labourer should no longer forego his annual pint of beer to purchase Champagne and Tokay for princes.

Thus far it would be sufficient if a portion of the income-tax were intercepted and set aside as a princes' fund: a farthing in the £. would be ample.

But this simple arrangement would I think, be unjust. It would indeed exempt the working classes. But there are other classes who equally deserve consideration. There is the poor widow, brought up as a lady, and left with £150 a year to maintain a family. There is the curate who has failed to secure

the promotion he hoped, and who is unable to get proper food and clothes and education for his children, and who submits to receive from a society the cast off clothes of charitable laymen. An Inquiry by the House of Commons into the just principles of the income-tax, revealed the fact, that not in the church only, but in law and medicine also, there are crowds of men who are candidates for any employment however ill remunerated, and to whom an increased income-tax means, a deprivation of the reasonable comforts, if not of the necessities of life. Shall the due splendours of princes be purchased with the widow's loaf, and be squeezed out of the necessities of the poor clergyman or lawyer or doctor ?

If then this special fund is to be raised by an income-tax, there must be exemptions for small incomes. What incomes should be exempted, where the line should be drawn, whether at £300, or £500, or £1,000, is one of those matters which can be settled only by discussion and comparison of opinions. All I contend for is the principle that a line should be so drawn as to exempt the needy among the educated classes as well as all the working classes.

I see the obvious objection : that I am proposing a graduation of taxes, by which large incomes would be taxed at a higher rate than small ones ; and that such a practice once admitted involves at least a partial confiscation of the income of the rich.

I reply that I am quite opposed to a graduation of taxation generally, because I believe it to be unjust ; but that in this particular case I see it not to be unjust.

Let us recollect why it is that everyone is bound to contribute to the fund raised by taxes. It is because that fund supports a government by which everyone is benefited. I pay taxes to government just as I pay for the bread I buy. But why should one man pay more than another? Each man holds his life to be as valuable as his neighbour's life; if the protection of life were the sole function of government therefore, the poor man should pay the same taxes as the rich man; just as the poor man pays for his quartern loaf the same price that is paid by the rich man. If you pretend that the rich man can pay more and therefore ought to pay more, I reply that for the same reason the rich man ought to pay more for his quartern loaf.

The protection of life is not the sole function of government: the protection of property is another and a most important function. Here is an evident distinction between the man who does not possess £20 and one who possesses millions: for government has more to do in protecting millions than in protecting £20.

But government has another great duty besides that of preventing or punishing domestic crime: it has the difficult and very expensive duty of warding off foreign invasion. In the due performance of military and naval functions, all classes are interested: the poor man's life, the honour of his wife and daughters, his means of living, are all endangered the moment an enemy's force appears on our shores. Men of other ranks have these interests and others in addition. The farmer is sure to lose his crops and his horses, and the landlord his rents; the

manufacturer finds his business stopped and perhaps his plant destroyed; the annuitant is in fear for his income. The government has much to do in protecting the working classes from foreign enemies: it has more to do in favour of the classes who possess property.

No one will deny that more tax ought to be paid by the man whose property as well as life is defended, than by the man whose life only is defended. It is commonly held<sup>(8)</sup> that "a man should pay to the State in proportion to the benefit he derives from it." This seems to me a mistake. I concede that a man should pay to the State because he derives benefit from it; but I do not see that the amount he should pay ought to be in proportion to the benefit he receives. Indeed it is impossible to measure that benefit. An old, weak, nervous man, may owe all the happiness of which he is capable to the presence in his neighbourhood of an efficient police force: a younger and bolder man may laugh at the dangers of thieves and robbers. The benefit derived from government by the old man, is a hundred times as great as that derived by the young man.

The true principle is, I believe, that everyone should repay to the State whatever his protection *costs* the State.<sup>(9)</sup> The theatrical manager asks for a policeman to keep order in the house: he should pay for that policeman's services. The nervous old man asks for a policeman to keep watch all night about his house: he should maintain that policeman. A turbulent Irish county requires a special force of armed men to maintain order: that county is justly called on to pay the cost of the force. The farmer,



the landowner, the manufacturer, require special protection against foreign depredators: they ought to pay taxes in proportion to the cost they thus impose on the State.

We assume generally, that men ought to pay taxes in proportion to the incomes they enjoy. It happens that this nearly carries out the principle I have explained: because we may suppose that the cost imposed on the State by each man is about in proportion to the income he enjoys. This is of course at the best only an approximation, but we accept it in fault of a better rule.

Now when you say that an income-tax ought to be graduated; that an aristocrat with £100,000 a year ought to pay 1s. in the £., when an annuitant with £300 a year pays 6d. in the £., you disregard this principle. You would make the wealthy man pay at a higher rate because he can better afford to pay at that rate. But this is the extreme socialistic principle, that a man is to be dealt with according to his needs, not according to his deserts; so that an artisan with a family shall receive 5s. a day when the bachelor receives 2s. Such schemes defy justice. The man with £1,000 a year is assumed to throw a cost on the State, four times as great as that thrown on the State by the man of £250 a year: therefore he is required to pay four times as much: that is he pays in proportion to his income at the same rate in the £. Each man pays for the protection he receives just as he pays for the commodities he buys. The rich man and the poor man pay the same for a ready-made coat or for a wheelbarrow: the rich man pays the market price: he pays according to the cost to

the maker, and not according to his own capacity to pay. So it should be with taxes: everyone should pay the cost the government incurs on his behalf.

## VIII.

**B**UT how is it consistent with this principle, to call on the richer men alone to pay the dowries of princes? How can this scheme be held free from injustice, from graduation, from confiscation, from socialism?

I reply that the expenditure of the State may be divided into several categories, just as that of an individual may. Each of us has certain necessary expenses; in buying a sufficiency of wholesome food, of warm clothing, of airy houseroom: without these our families cannot enjoy health. Many of us regard as necessities what are really superfluities; broad cloth and silks, kid gloves and well made boots: these seem to be necessary because without them we can scarcely maintain the social position to which we have been brought up: let us emigrate, and in the sheep-run or the prairie we shall find that they are superfluities. We shall all agree that champagne and turtle soup, Lafite and Tokay are luxuries.

Government expenditure may also be placed in several categories. Police, Courts of Justice, Armies, and Navies, are absolutely necessary both for the protection of life and the protection of property. The poor and the rich are all interested in these: and we may assume that the government expenditure in behalf of each person is roughly proportioned to the income of that person.

But when we come to the splendours of a Court, to gigantic horses and tall footmen, gorgeous carriages and magnificent palaces, levees and drawing-rooms, we must form another category of things superfluous to the many, though they are an essential part of aristocratic life. Such magnificence may dazzle the vulgar, and may extort a blind reverence. But if the people, the tax-payers, become intelligent enough to see through the glittering outside into the hollowness within; if they protest that they would rather not pay for the spectacle, then it behoves the richer classes to take the burden on their own shoulders.

And if the many, pinched with comparative poverty, emerging from their dismal east end and inevitably contrasting their own squalor with the grandeur of Belgravia, gloomily pronounce against the cost of royalty, it then becomes expedient as well as just that those who desire the continuance of a Court should furnish the means of maintaining it. Let the cost be supplied by those for whose satisfaction it exists.

This principle may be alarming, because it may be applied more widely. If the maintenance of the National Gallery or of the Kensington art department were submitted to the poor vicars, or surgeons, or solicitors, or struggling men of small business, they would say, we highly approve of your keeping up these institutions, but we think it hard that for that purpose you should take the shillings which we much want for the support and education of our children. We do not grumble at paying for police, army, navy, all of which are necessary for our

defence; but we do think that in a nation abounding in surplus wealth, the superfluous state expenditure might be furnished by the richer classes. This is not graduation and socialism, it is almost mere justice; and if not mere justice, it is only an application of that mercy by which the destitute are exempted from poor-rates, and small incomes are exempted from the income-tax.

This then, is my conclusion: that royalty in Great Britain is hollow; a mere traditional institution doomed sooner or later to extinction; that it is the interest of all to maintain it until its natural term of existence has run out; that since the taxpayers at large are fast coming round to the opinion that it does not exist for their benefit, it is at least expedient, and perhaps a demand of justice, to exempt them from contributing to the cost of it; that therefore a special fund should be raised from the wealthy alone to supply the dowries and allowances of the royal family.

#### NOTE.

Anyone looking at this question for the first time, might imagine a difficulty, apparently fatal. Suppose incomes of £300 a year and under to be exempted from the dowries'-fund. A. B. has £300 a year, derived from several sources: a house yielding him £100 a year, Consols yielding the same, a mortgage yielding the same. The tenant of the house will have to pay the tax and deduct it from his rent: the Bank of England will stop the tax



from the Consols: the mortgagor will pay the tax and deduct it from the annual interest. A. B. will have to reclaim from the revenue department all these stoppages: a process apparently hopeless.

The reply however, is simple: this process is always going on as regards persons having incomes under £100 or £150 a year, derived from various sources. The task is accomplished, though it is perplexing, as will appear from the following evidence, given to an Income-tax Committee in 1852 by Mr. Pressly. (p. 228.)

“A. B. has an income under £150 a year, consisting of, first, a pension as a retired officer of £20; secondly, a house and garden out of the county where the party resides, and let to a tenant at £30 a year, such house, however, being subject to a ground rent of £2 a year, and charged with an annuity of £10 a year to a sister residing in Ireland; thirdly, interest on £400 lent to the trustees of a road at five per cent., £20; fourthly, dividends on £500, three per cent. Consols, £15; fifthly, interest on a note of hand for £400, lent at five per cent., £20; sixthly, from foreign dividends, £20; seventhly, from an undivided moiety of the rent of a house and land jointly with a sister, £22. 10s. 0d.; total income, £147. 10s. 0d., less the ground rent and the annuity above mentioned. The party has no return whatever to make of his income; and although entitled to the exemption, he is nevertheless indirectly taxed in respect of every source of income. In such case the tax is deducted from him by others, and the following is the process he has to go through to attain a repayment. He has first to attend on the

appointed day of the commission meeting in the district to make his appeal: having so attended and proved his exemption, he has to procure, first, as to the pension, a certificate from the Pay Office, by whom the deduction of the tax has been made, that he is in receipt of the pension, and has paid the tax; secondly, as to the house and garden, a certificate that the house is in assessment, and the tax paid by his tenant; thirdly, as to the interest on the road bond, a certificate from the treasurer of the road that the tolls have been assessed, and the tax deducted and paid to the revenue; fourthly, as to the dividends, the bank books have to be examined and the stock taxed; fifthly, as to the interest on the note of hand, it has to be shown that the borrower is in assessment for his property or profits, and has paid the tax, and made no reduction therefrom in respect of such interest; sixthly, with regard to the foreign dividends, the accounts of the agents paying the dividends have to be examined, and a certificate produced by them that the tax has been deducted from the claimant, and paid to the revenue; and lastly, as to the undivided moiety of the rent of the house, proof of the house being in assessment and the tax paid by the occupier must be produced; and when all this is completed the duty is returned, but not to the full amount which the party has paid; because in the case of the ground rent, the claimant being entitled to deduct the sevenpence in the pound from the ground landlord, and to make the like deduction from the recipient of the annuity, the amount to be returned is less the tax on such ground rent and annuity; and if either of the parties

entitled to the ground rent or the annuity shall prove that their income is under £150 a year, they have to seek a repayment thereof in the same manner as the first claimant. Besides all these difficulties, it may possibly happen, after the exemption has been granted, that the income of the individual in the year exceeds £150 in this way: it is only to suppose that the dividends on the first half-year's stock," (apparently a confusion between dividends and dividend upon dividends), "payable in July, have been re-invested, the claim having been made at the beginning of the year, very soon after April, or that the claimant during the year becomes possessed of the other undivided moiety of the house alluded to in the seventh case; he is then in the receipt of an income exceeding £150 a year; and yet the exemption has been granted to him, because when the claim was made his income was really less than £150 a year. These and similar cases are of very frequent occurrence."

## NOTES TO ESSAY II.

- (1) Pall Mall Gazette, 18 Feb., 1871.
- (2) Reynolds's Weekly Journal, 15 April, 1871.
- (3) Daily News, 5 Feb., 1871.
- (4) Quarterly Review, 75, 432.
- (5) Pall Mall Gazette, 14 Feb., 1871.
- (6) *Ib.*
- (7) *Ib.*, 15 April, 1871.
- (8) Professor Neate, 3 Lectures, 1861, pa. 7.
- (9) Babbage, *Econ. of Manufactures*, edn. 1833, 245 : Babbage Pamphlet, 1845 : *Statistical Journal*, 25, 339, and 26, 87.





## Essay III.

### COMPARATIVE MORALITY.

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#### I.

TO make a comparison of the moral condition of different places or of different periods, is a task of great difficulty. How can we determine that one town excels another : that a rural population is better or worse than that of cities : that one class of society rises higher in the ethical scale than another class : that of two countries the one contains the worthier people : that modern times are more or less virtuous than ancient times : that civilized races predominate in goodness over barbarians ?

The experience and observation of any one man are worth little. If he lives long in his own town without any special intercourse outside it, he may know much of the facts around him, but he has no standard by which to estimate them : being of a splenetic temper he will condemn his neighbours as drunkards and brutes ; or being of a charitable

temper he will maintain that his neighbours' virtues are their own, and their vices are the inevitable result of circumstances : he will shut his eyes to the vices and will exaggerate the virtues. Another observer goes from city to city, and stays long enough to become well acquainted with a certain circle in each : he becomes able to say that in one place the better classes have unusual education and intelligence ; that in another place there is too much talk, even in society, of business, of speculations, of gains and losses ; that in a third place there prevails an odious pursepride, and the practice of valuing the very superfluities of life, not by the satisfaction they afford, but by the money they cost. After all, what does the traveller know of the morals of the body of the people ?

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To compare towns with rural districts is a still harder task. At a first glance, vice seems the peculiar denizen of populous places. Men will generally take for granted Southey's assertion<sup>(1)</sup> to his friend William Taylor, that virtue is the product of the country ; and they will not notice how Southey himself was corrupted by living away from the haunts of men ; how pragmatistical and self-sufficient he became,<sup>(2)</sup> how he could speak of Scott as an amiable and agreeable man of no great powers, and could prophecy that though a *Lady of the Lake* sold in ten thousands of copies, while a *Thalaba* hardly sold in a thousand copies, yet posterity would reverse the false verdict.

Wiser men will agree with a more masculine

thinker. Dr. Arnold at the close of a school session naturally desired repose, and the more because he injudiciously added to his scholastic anxieties the labours of an editor and historian: to him therefore, the seclusion of Fox How must have resembled a paradise: yet he declared<sup>(3)</sup> that it was far better to live altogether in London than altogether in Westmoreland.

But considering the matter in the interests of the mass of mankind, it is difficult to resist the suggestions of our senses. Walk through Whitechapel or the streets about the Liverpool Docks. You are sensible of depression of spirits, witnessing the squalor of the children, the dinginess of the buildings, the griminess of the men's faces. In a busy manufacturing town, there is one evil less; you do not find shoals of boys and girls, selling oranges and begging: but you have the same gloomy tint, the same dirt and grime. Protest as one may against outward impressions, one cannot believe that such ugliness is compatible with goodness.

On the contrary, a walk in the country calls up images of repose and innocent satisfaction. The open sunshine, the unbroken space, the smokeless breeze, raise the spirits of the denizen long in populous city pent. All the senses gratified at once, forbid us to think of misery and vice.

But these impressions require the correction of experience. We shall discover on inquiry that the town is not all vice, nor the country all virtue. Thousands of mechanics may be found who have lived in the same quarter or the same street for twenty years: men as capable of resisting temptation



as if they had all the outward advantages of their employers; and whose greatest excess is the getting a headache on the annual Christmas holiday. In the village if there are sober, well conducted labourers, there are also drunkards, brutes and spendthrifts, poachers and thieves. Charming as is a neat English village, Asmodeus lifting the thatch would find strange coarseness, indecency, and vice.

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If after visiting Whitechapel or the Seven Dials, you pass on to Pall Mall or Belgravia, you have a sense of relief: you have done with the loop'd and window'd raggedness, the precocious cunning, the flaring gin palace: you are among open streets, wealth and magnificence, outward decency and decorum. Penetrate no further. If you will go below the surface, you will find wickedness and debauchery; gambling, immodesty, every vice named and unnamed that disfigures humanity.

Even in the secondary matter of refinement of manners, the middle classes are astonished from time to time at the revelations which fall from the empyrean above them. If an emphatic remark of a colonel or general is quoted at a county gathering, it is commonly backed up with a profane oath. Now we all know that George IV swore as they did in Flanders, and that in the presence of ladies. We are not amazed when we learn that the rough voiced Wellington brought the bivouac into the drawing room. But we should be glad to believe that princes who have not George IV's literary acquirements, are free from his vices, and that soldiers without the Duke's genius, abstained from his coarseness.

The ladies of the aristocracy occasionally give strange glimpses of celestial anger. Some years ago,<sup>(4)</sup> the newspapers published a correspondence between Lady Seymour, the "Queen of Beauty," and Lady Shuckburgh. Lady Seymour wrote to ask the character of a servant named Stedman, and inquired whether she was a good, plain cook. Lady Shuckburgh replied that having a professed cook and housekeeper, she knew nothing about the under-servants. Lady Seymour pressed a further inquiry, when Lady Shuckburgh directed her housemaid to write for her, thus:—"Stedman informs me that your ladyship does not keep either a cook or housekeeper, and that you only require a girl who can cook a mutton-chop; if so, Stedman, or any other scullion, will be found equal to cook for, or manage the establishment of the Queen of Beauty." A trader, lounging through Mayfair with this paragraph in his hand, begins to believe that snobbism is not engrossed by the middle ranks.

If I were asked my deliberate opinion as to the state of advancement of different classes, I would only reply that other things being equal, the most industrious class will be found in the most favourable condition. The superiority of industry over idleness, is one of the commonplace truths of morality. Idleness, says a statute of Henry VIII, is "the mother and root of all vices."<sup>(4A)</sup> A distinguished French democrat, General Foy, uttered this denunciation.<sup>(4B)</sup> "L'aristocratie? je vais vous le dire: l'aristocratie, c'est la ligue, la coalition de ceux qui veulent consommer sans produire, vivre sans travailler, occuper toutes les places sans être en état

de les remplir, envahir tous les honneurs sans les avoir mérités—voilà l'aristocratie ! ”

Now the lowest class is of necessity industrious : the highest class is in fact slothful ; and if other things were equal therefore, the lowest class ought to be superior to the highest. But other things are far from being equal. The highest class, born to the possession of superfluities and luxuries, is exposed to temptations of self-indulgence, and often rushes into debauchery and gambling to relieve the pressure of ennui. The lowest class in its few holidays, is apt to indulge in coarse and degrading sensuality. A vigorous, honest, sober workman in the prime of life, may be perfectly happy and has little stimulus to misconduct ; but his wife in all the troubles of maternity is less fortunate, and his children are exposed to hardships and temptations. Then, the greater part of workmen are not vigorous and honest and sober and in the prime of life, and to men who are ailing, or given to drinking, or feeble through age, there are inevitable tendencies to wrong their employers in the quantity and quality of the work they perform.

We do not quote so often as formerly, Voltaire's saying : that English society is like a barrel of English beer ; froth at top, dregs at the bottom, and sound liquor in the middle. Some persons have ceased to believe the saying to be true. They see persons of the middle class brought before police courts for drunkenness, for assaults, for commercial frauds, for murder. Watts, Pullinger, Redpath, Robson, Roupell, Higgs, Thurtell, Rush, Palmer, belonged to the middle class. The Divorce Court

also, testifies that that class is not free from gross conjugal cruelty and infidelity.

I need not say that this only proves the existence of vice and criminality in the middle class. No one ever denied their existence. The question is how much of these there is in one class and in another: are there proportionately as many criminals among the middle class as among the lower? Now this can be determined pretty nearly by the state of instruction among criminals. The middle classes constitute perhaps one-eighth of the whole population. Of these, many are imperfectly educated. Possibly, if we take the police standard of "well-educated," one-twentieth of the population may come under that category. If so, then we may expect to find something less than one-twentieth of criminals recorded as "well-educated." But in fact we do not find one-fiftieth or one-hundredth of criminals recorded as "well-educated."

There is nothing then in our returns of crime to make us dispute Voltaire's maxim. I do not know enough of the Divorce Court to enable me to offer any argument upon it. I only see that the lower classes are prevented by the want of money from going into it: I cannot judge how far the fear of public opinion restrains the highest classes more than the middle classes from using it.

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If it is difficult to justly compare one class with another, it is still more difficult to compare one nation with another. Fifty years ago, the English claimed for themselves nearly a monopoly of a sense



of justice and of domestic purity. No doubt, the French Revolution had left behind it on the Continent, a certain coarseness and ferocity of sentiment: men and women whose innocent fathers and mothers had died on the guillotine, would have not unwillingly seen a massacre of the vagabonds of the *Cour des Miracles*: the wild justice of revenge would have satisfied a craving nursed up from childhood. The wars of a quarter of a century too, had disturbed the balance of society: they had brought to the surface rough and illiterate soldiers, brave in the field, uncouth in the drawing-room, coarse in their amours. But that generation has passed away.

We have learnt to abandon our extravagant claims to moral superiority. We have perhaps even run into the opposite excess, and have contracted a habit of decrying our own country to an unjust degree: a far safer practice than that of overpraise, but wrong as all untruth is wrong.

We have a right to assume that the long continued regularity of English administration, undisturbed for two centuries by any considerable civil war, and for many centuries by any foreign invasion, has produced among the many, a respect for law unknown among nations who have recently experienced the convulsions of war and revolutions. We have equally a right to assume that the traditional liberty of British citizens, has nourished a personal independence and a contempt for deceit, impossible to the weak and oppressed. We certainly have clear evidence that an ordinary Englishman has greater self-reliance under difficulties than is exhibited by men of other races. Among the effeminate Asiatics, a band of

Sepoys will follow an English corporal, but will trust no one of themselves. Even the robust Germans will in case of a mining accident, look to a Cornishman or a Scotchman to direct their proceedings. In the Crimea, though the French sometimes surpassed us in military organization, the individual Englishman showed more pluck than his French brother in arms: a contusion from a spent ball disabled a French private, but the Russians seldom took an Englishman prisoner unless he was fearfully wounded. I am convinced that our centuries of freedom have developed among us the manly virtues, to a degree not found among nations less traditionally free.

On the subject of deceit, I cannot pretend that taking an ideal standard we have anything to boast of. Boys and youths even of the higher ranks, have here nothing heroic about them. Some years ago, two Cambridge undergraduates were summoned before their tutor or dean. Smith had been riding the day before, in contravention of some order: he was asked about it, and denied that he had been riding. He appealed to Jones to support him. Jones knew that Smith had been riding, but he confirmed his denial. The dean, not convinced, went off at once to the livery stables, but the accused had been too quick for him, and had warned the master of the stables to say that Smith had not been out.

But the verdict of the man's friends is more instructive than the scene itself: the verdict was that Smith was a cad to appeal to Jones, but that Jones so appealed to was bound to tell the lie. Youths of twenty, lately schoolboys, had not shaken off the tacit combination to protect themselves

against authority: they had so far the weakness of slaves and cowards.

Dr. Arnold always assumed that whatever a boy told him was true. Many Rugby men think that he carried this too far. I long tried the same practice with my clerks: I am sorry to say that I got shamefully imposed upon. There are a few noble natures who scorn deceit in whatever rank they may be born; but clerks generally feel towards their employers, as schoolboys feel towards their masters: employers and masters are beings created to be deceived. The most shocking part is that with many clerks, the lie direct from their employer, produces neither amazement nor anger.

We cannot be surprised then, if workmen practise a vice common to university men and clerks. Artisans, within my experience, are not so bad as men-servants, some of whom have a facility of invention in false excuses, which is almost as amusing as abominable. Artisans generally are more independent, though their word is not to be taken without proof.

It would be unjust to the classes I have mentioned, if I left it to be inferred that other classes are perfectly truthful. There is mendacity all round the circle. There are clergymen who teach doctrines they scarcely believe, or who strangle their honest doubts: good men perhaps, otherwise, but who like Schleiermacher, administer with unction the sacraments of a Christian church, while they deny the existence of a personal God. There are medical men who exaggerate their patients' disorders that they may have the merit of curing them, or go on

ignorantly struggling with sickness they do not understand, lest by calling in another man's skill, they should be superseded in their practice. There are lawyers who ask no questions about the merit of their client's case, but make it their business to win right or wrong; or who stir up strife that they may profit by it; or who, in dealing with their client's affairs, take the course most profitable, not to the client, but to the solicitor. There are merchants who in buying, though they will not tell a lie, will act one: manufacturers who will take orders they know they cannot execute to the time required; who will exaggerate the merits of their own goods and unfairly depreciate those of their rivals; who will deceive their workmen to keep down wages.

Still, the degrees of veracity and honesty are very various, comparing class with class. Few workmen will volunteer a statement that they have received more than their due; fewer still will spontaneously repay money they have borrowed. But among reputable traders, the general rule is to point out mistakes on either side of an account, and to show a seller that he has wronged himself in an invoice or a bill of parcels; though there are certain shabby persons who profess that they keep their own accounts and not their neighbours'. We have this test in favour of the middle classes: that workmen generally suspect each other of unfairness, but seldom dispute the word of an employer.

I must say this also, in favour of Englishmen; that within my own limited experience, their word is far more worthy of credit than that of Frenchmen. Indeed, in reading French novels of the highest



class, it surprises most of us to see the tricks, evasions, downright lies, attributed to the heroes and heroines: immoralities which if practised in England, are at least concealed and blushed at, and which do not stain the pages of our novels.

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If we attempt a comparison of ancient and modern times, we are liable to gross error. We know the manners of the Romans to a considerable degree, from the satirists: from Juvenal for example, himself a Bohemian of a coarse type. We lightly apply to all what was true of only a few. Many persons believe that there were among the heathen, thousands of quiet families pursuing the noiseless tenor of their way, and therefore unheard of.

That there was much coarseness of expression among ancient authors is manifest: David Hume quotes from Horace an expression now quite inadmissible. But was not this owing to the fact, that until the Empire was fully established, women did not associate familiarly with men? We generally find among coteries of men, in clubs, in the inns of court, a cynical style of talk which astonishes anyone long unaccustomed to it: whereas the habit of associating with women purifies the conversation. We are also too ready to believe that the striking examples of depravity handed down to us, indicate general corruption: now Messalina was doubtless a beast rather than a woman; but was Catherine of Russia much better, with her Orloff and Potemkin and other favourites whose names are generally unknown? And shall we infer that all Roman princesses were

vicious, when we know that Catharine's contemporaries were some of them, like Maria Theresa, excellent wives and mothers?

Certainly, the practice of slavery was highly unfavourable to domestic morality. Davus and Sosia, themselves made tricky and fraudulent by oppression, carried corruption among their masters' sons: just as in the southern United States before 1861, Olmsted found the ordinary morals of families at a very low ebb. Marriage again, had an ephemeral character worthy of the German Lutherans: for the pattern Cicero, the preacher of ethics, thought it no shame to divorce Terentia and marry again without any fault alleged against the first wife; a practice so common that the word *Virginus*, used to indicate a man who had abstained from divorce, was eulogistically inscribed on a tomb.<sup>(5)</sup> Was this Roman practice of divorce worse than that of Berlin towards the close of last century, when the great Protestant divine Schleiermacher urged a married lady to get divorced that she might marry him? and when a respectable banker deliberately permitted his young wife to be divorced from him that she might marry Frederick Schlegel? Was it worse than the present practice of some of the United States? I say nothing of the French revolutionary period, when as it is said there were in Paris as many divorces every day as there were marriages. In one respect, Rome beginning to decline was worse than modern states. At present, economists have often to regret the prematureness of youthful marriage, though in fact we do not see such extravagant unions as that of General Lafayette, who at sixteen years old married

a lady at fifteen, of his own rank and with the parents' consent; thus becoming a father when he ought to have been at school. Among us however, men able to support a family generally marry early. At Rome on the contrary, as is notorious, marriage under the Empire was so shunned that Augustus took measures for enforcing it. This dislike of domestic life has been attributed to the divorce laws, according to which after the last Punic war, a wife might require a divorce just as a husband might:<sup>(6)</sup> an explanation not confirmed by the experience of German Lutherans, among whom divorce is easy and marriages are numerous.

On the whole, though we may disallow the satires in proof of ordinary Roman morals, we can scarcely doubt that slavery, facility of divorce, and neglect of marriage, imply an absence of domestic purity and a want of family life with a corruption of morals, far beyond the practice of the body of modern nations, and more like that of the idle and dissolute bachelors of a metropolis on the one hand, and the small class of vagabonds and professional criminals on the other.

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An attempt to contrast the vices and virtues of the half-civilized with those of the more civilized races, if easier than the previous tasks, is not without its difficulty. We are in danger of being misled by the inaccurate accounts of travellers. Missionaries, however self-devoted, are much addicted to dark shades in their pictures, and look suspiciously at heathen virtues. Believe all we have been told, and we shall regard the Hindoos as being commonly the

volaries of the sanguinary goddess Kali; just as an Asiatic traveller, stumbling on the small tribes of devil-worshippers on the borders of the two continents, might represent the westerns as habitually bowing down to Satan. Our childhood was amused with pious tales of the formidable career of the car of Juggernaut, crushing willing hundreds or thousands on its road; later accounts reduce the horrors to marvellously small dimensions.<sup>(7)</sup>

The external and visible life of the half-civilized is very different from that of Europeans. Government is more arbitrary and more savage: human life is far less valued: a Chinese Leh may boast of the thousands or tens of thousands he has sent to execution: a Japanese condemned by his sovereign rips himself up without delay: the helpless and hopeless aged are committed to the sacred Ganges, and when drowned are left to float down the stream. The seclusion of women, and the absence of mixed society, entails that coarseness which I have remarked on as characterizing assemblies of men in Europe.

But it is curious on the other hand, to note the difference between the more civilized Chinese and the comparatively uncultivated Tartars and Thibetans. MM. Huc and Gabet travelled painfully though cheerfully, from Mantchou Tartary to Thibet, and thence sorely against their will round the north of the Himalayas in a wide circuit to Canton. They fell in with many races more or less barbarians: with Buddhist Lamas and Buddhist worshippers; with flourishing towns, squalid villages, cultivated fields, and wandering shepherds: they crossed trackless mountains on which they nearly died of



cold; they waded through swamps and paddled across swollen rivers: they lacked food and water at one time, and were choked at another with the fat tails of sheep forced upon them by the hospitality of the dwellers in tents.

From time to time they came within the limits of the Celestial Empire, or met with Chinese in territories where the Brother of the Sun claims a disputed jurisdiction. Whenever the travellers had to do with the Tartars or Thibetans they met with simplicity of manners, kindness, and good faith: no sooner had they any transaction with the Chinese than they encountered cunning and chicanery. I say nothing of the willingness of the Thibetan Buddhists to listen to Christian teaching, though the inquiring spirit of even the Lamas and their readiness to learn, are admirable: I say nothing of the fact that at Lhassa, the capital of Thibet, the town which the two missionaries desired to make their head quarters, it was not the natives but the Chinese authorities who drove them away, and refused them permission to take the direct southern road to Calcutta. Enmity to foreigners indeed is the deliberate policy of the Chinese government, and proves nothing as to the temper of the people. But the difference which is remarkable, is that between the individual Chinese, and the individual Tartar or Thibetan: the lettered Chinese being subtle, tricky, fraudulent, addicted to cheating the Tartar by lies and conspiracies and false calculations, while the rustic shepherd is contented with the gains which honestly belong to him. I do not pretend to any generalization: I do not affirm that as a rule civil-

ized men are morally inferior to barbarians: I only point out one of many instances in which they are found to be inferior; and my only inference is that with nations as with individuals, cleverness and goodness are not invariable companions.

## II.

WHATEVER may be the difficulty of comparing the virtues of one nation and another, it seems to many persons at first sight that nothing can be easier than to compare their crimes. In England, in France, in Germany, so many murders annually committed: in each of those countries so many persons living: the proportion of murders in each country is a sum in division. But this statement, glibly made, is fallacious. It assumes that a murder is simply a murder: it overlooks the fact that what is called manslaughter in one country is called murder in another, and that there are unsettled degrees in the guilt of taking away life, from something just below justifiable homicide, down to the lowest depth of base, sordid, premeditated murder for gain.

If this is true of the most fatal crimes, it is still more true of slighter infractions of the law, and especially of drunkenness, an offence rather vicious than criminal. Comparing indeed, one of our own towns with another, we may pronounce with safety that where we find twice or five times as many persons "drunk and incapable" in one as in another, the former has the greater number of drunkards. But we have no such test to apply as between one

country and another, or as between one metropolis and another: we cannot say that the rate of drunk and incapable is so much in London and so much in Paris: we can determine nothing statistically.

Nor can we make any accurate comparison by other means. This however, we can do: we can refute the common and reiterated assertion that excessive drinking is a vice peculiar to England: we can also throw great doubt on the fanciful belief of the day, that drinking is the mother of all crime; for we can point out southern and eastern countries in which drinking is rare and crime is rife.

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Few of us need any illustration of the irresistible power of a craving for stimulants and narcotics. A slave to it declared that if hell were open before him, he would snatch a glass of brandy from its border, though he knew that the draught would cast him headlong into the pit.<sup>(8)</sup> It did not occur to him that a sight of the popular hell would stir up a passion of fear capable of overpowering the passion for brandy: that the sulphurous glare might quench the spark in the throat. No one can forget the melancholy tale of the moral shipwreck suffered by the greatest genius of the last generation: how an original inconstancy of purpose gradually relaxed into an addiction to opium, struggled against in vain: and if it is impossible to justify the so-called friend who revealed the fatal morbidness, there can be no complaint on behalf of another and a stately writer who himself narrated his own downward course. There was a strange example lately given

of the intensity of desire on the part of a woman whose friends kept her moneyless, but who sold the teeth in her jaws, and had them pulled out one by one, to earn the price of a glass of gin.

Frightful as are these occasional aberrations, yet well-meaning persons exaggerate the evils of drinking generally, just as we perhaps condemn unjustly the moderate use of opium in the East. To a Frenchman the drinking of light wine appears innocent or laudable; but beer is a debasing liquor.<sup>(9)</sup> A French writer hopes that hereafter, England and other northern countries may get at a low price "natural wine, wine which is a food," and that they will struggle against the *brutalizing* influence of beer, the use of which has been increasing in France for the last twenty years.

Many philanthropists in England believe that stimulants cause far the greatest part of crime. An excellent statistical writer, Mr. Neison, in his Contributions to Vital Statistics, put the opinion doubtfully twenty years ago. He found<sup>(10)</sup> that comparing the two sexes, there are four and a half times as many crimes committed by males as by females. I see elsewhere that in France nearly the same proportion prevails. But Mr. Neison also shows that the recorded deaths from intemperance are about in the same proportion: viz., four and a half males to one female. He concludes that "crime legally considered, and intemperance in its ordinary acceptation, are concomitants of each other." Concomitants is a safe word, but the phrase would generally be taken to mean that drinking is the cause of crime.

A comparison of the sexes however, really proves



nothing. The milder character of women, their less command of money, their more retired habits, protect them from temptations to which men are exposed. Therefore, women commit fewer crimes: therefore also, they are less given to excessive drinking. The abstinence from crime and the abstinence from stimulants are collateral effects of the same causes: they do not stand in the relation of cause and effect.

If, as is often stated, drinking were the cause of the greatest part of crime, we should find a pretty general consent of competent observers as to that fact. But Mr. Elliott, the late chaplain of the Birmingham gaol, after careful investigation, pronounced that only a moderate proportion of first offences were thus caused. So in the great New York prison of Sing Sing,<sup>(11)</sup> containing 1370 convicts, of those received in 1869, only one-seventh were intemperate persons.

Thoughtless teetotallers again, often the most dogmatical of men, declare that most madness is caused by drinking. The facts are against them. We find<sup>(12)</sup> that in Bethlehem Hospital, out of 1428 patients admitted, only about one-eighth had become insane through drunkenness: in Wilts about one-seventh: through the whole kingdom in 1844, one-sixth. But to support the sweeping assertions of temperance orators, there ought to be found not one-eighth but seven-eighths, not one-seventh but six-sevenths, not one-sixth but five-sixths.

Here another comparison of the sexes confirms the moderate opinion. Drunkenness prevails so much more among males, that four or five men die of it to one woman. We ought then on the teetotal hy-

pothesis, to find four or five insane men to one insane woman: we do find no such excess; nay we find more women than men in lunatic asylums: and though it may be urged that this is partly because men stay a shorter time, being more quickly removed either by cure or by death, yet there still remains the fact that the number of men admitted is little greater than that of women, and is far indeed from the three or four to one it ought to be if drinking is the principal cause of madness.

That many crimes are committed by persons under the influence of stimulants, is undoubted. A man resolves to murder his sweetheart: he primes himself just as soldiers have often been primed on the eve of battle. A drowned man is found to have left an empty brandy bottle on the bank: he did not drown himself because he was drunk, he drank to fortify his courage and lessen his expected struggles. Alcohol is here the instrument and not the cause of the offence.

If temperance were a safeguard against crime, there should be no criminals among sober nations: no banditti and no murderers in Italy; no smugglers and no stabbers in Spain: yet highway robbery, assassination, smuggling, ferocity, are far more common in the two peninsulas than they are in England, Scotland, Holland, or Denmark.

It was the same in the days of the Reformation: drinking in one country, immorality in another.<sup>(13)</sup> Luther after a visit to Italy, said that for a hundred thousand florins he would not have missed the sight of Rome: not on account of its antiquities or its classical reminiscences: not for its former greatness

and present decadence; not because of the grand moral lesson of the instability of human greatness. It was the wickedness of the Eternal City which interested him.

“The crimes of Rome are incredible: its perversity would not be credited by anyone without the testimony of his eyes, of his ears, and of his experience. . . . There, reign every iniquity and scandal, and every atrocious crime: blind covetousness, contempt of God, perjury, unnatural offences . . . . *We Germans drown ourselves in liquor* whilst the Italians are sober. But the Italians are the most impious of men.” They share the hypocrisy of Leo X, who after hearing a discussion on the immortality or mortality of the soul, declared for its mortality. “For” said he, “it would be frightful to believe in a future life. Conscience is a malignant beast which arms man against himself.”

Just therefore, as in Spain and Italy now you have sobriety, superstition and ferocity, so centuries ago, you had in Italy, sobriety, hypocrisy, irreverence, covetousness, perjury, and every abomination.

How can it be contended that drinking is the parent of all crime? Let us abandon these exaggerations, and rest satisfied with the simple truth, that drinking to excess is a debasing and brutalizing practice.

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If intoxication were a new vice, we might have more hope of seeing it eradicated. But we find it prevailing at all times, even the most ancient: we cannot forget that Noah disgraced himself before his

sons: we remember that among the Greeks, great conquerors drank, and that a great philosopher charmingly described a drinking bout: we are all familiar with the jovial and harmonious verses of an epicurean Roman.

Everyone knows how considerable a place the vice occupies in Shakspeare's plays; how Cassio fell under the severe reprimand of the Moor: nor ought we to forget that if good wine is pronounced to be a "good familiar creature," these words, as Di Vernon remarks, are put into the mouth of Iago the villain.

We must all remember the striking examples given by Macaulay, of the coarse drunkenness practised among the highest classes in the Stuart days. Miss Berry in her *England and France*, mentions another case; that of the judges who condemned Algernon Sidney to death, and who a day or two afterwards took part in a drunken debauch at a City wedding, attended by the Lord Mayor, the sheriffs, the aldermen and many of the nobles.<sup>(13A)</sup>

According to Mr. Isaac Disraeli, there was a time when the English were sober.<sup>(14)</sup>

"We shall, probably, outlive that custom of hard-drinking, which was so long one of our national vices. The Frenchman, the Italian, and the Spaniard, only taste the luxury of the grape, but seem never to have indulged in set convivial parties, or drinking-matches, as some of the northern people. Of this folly of ours, which was, however, a *borrowed one*, and which lasted for two centuries, the history is curious: the variety of its modes and customs; its freaks and extravagances; the technical language introduced to raise it into an art; and the inventions



contrived to animate the progress of the thirsty souls of its votaries.

“ Nations, like individuals, in their intercourse are great imitators; and we have the authority of Camden, who lived at the time, for asserting that ‘ the English in *their long wars in the Netherlands first learnt* to drown themselves with immoderate drinking, and by drinking others’ healths to impair their own. Of all the northern nations, they had been before this most commended for their sobriety.’ And the historian adds, ‘ that the vice had so diffused itself over the nation, that in our days it was first restrained by severe laws.’ ”

If Mr. Disraeli had written fifty years later, he would probably not have prophesied of the future, but would have plainly said that we had outlived the national vice of hard-drinking: since his remarks had reference to the habits of educated society. A generation after he wrote, drinking bouts were almost unknown among men pretending to respectability, if I may speak from my own experience; but there still remained the habit of assembling a dinner party as early as five o’clock, instead of postponing it as at present till seven o’clock: gentlemen sat at least an hour longer than they sit now; they passed the bottle quickly, and drank port wine enough to assure a headache next morning. There are still sets of men among whom the old practices obtain: the idle and vicious, the sporting-men and the gamblers, the spendthrifts and the Bohemians: but within my rather large circle of acquaintance social drunkenness is unknown.

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There are however, painful exceptions to be made. It is stated on indisputable authority that among ladies of all ages there has arisen a practice of taking a good deal of wine, as a means of recruiting the strength during the London season. Another ugly feature added to the demon of fashionable frivolity and fastness! I fear also, that mischief has been done by the "London heresy" of which the late Dr. Todd was the heresiarch: a doctrine which taught men and women to use stimulants where depletion was used by our fathers. Medical men are answerable for many corruptions, in giving their female patients of middle age the advice to take all the stimulants they can. The physician trusts the lady's sense of right: in some cases he destroys that sense for life.

The Americans share this new abomination. One of their newspapers says<sup>(15)</sup> that among the upper classes of women, some take opium, others champagne, others fancy drinks: that deaths from delirium tremens "have occurred this winter among young, generous, and loveable girls;" and that there are many sent to lunatic asylums.

Now when I say that social drunkenness is unknown, I express no opinion as to the extent of secret drinking among men. By secret I do not mean merely private: I am not thinking of the beer and wine a gentleman takes when he dines alone, nor of spirits taken as a nightcap; these have greatly diminished in my time. By secret drinking I mean the unauthorized, unavowed, nip of brandy or glass of sherry taken from the bottle carefully locked out of sight. Whether this hazardous and ruinous prac-

tice has grown or decayed, who can say? It is conceivable that ladies and gentlemen, debarred by modern public opinion from their former social enjoyments, may avenge themselves by greater addiction to illicit sips. The *Saturday Review* is no safe guide, because it is too much given to sensational satire; but I cannot of my own knowledge contradict its assertions.<sup>(15A)</sup>

“The habit of taking irregular ‘nips,’ ‘pegs,’ ‘pick-me-ups,’ or ‘eye-openers,’ as the Yankees call them, is established among us, and seems to be rapidly gaining ground. The amount of mischief which is produced among all ranks of mercantile men by the growing custom of drinking frequent glasses of wine, and especially sherry, not at meals and along with or just after food, but tossed off at odd moments, as a mere ‘nip,’ either out of a private bottle or at one of the public bars, is producing incalculable mischief. Ask any doctor who has much to do with City men, and he will tell you of the terrible increase of paralysis among this class. A yearly list of the number of young men who either perish in this melancholy way or are reduced to permanent imbecility would startle those who have never had their attention called to it. . . . ‘Overwork’ is the usual explanation; ‘the strain of business,’ ‘anxieties of speculation.’ . . . It is the free use of stimulants during working hours, enfeebling the mind and paralysing the frame, which makes the work so fatally exhausting.”

This was followed up by the *Law Times*, which attacked its readers on the same ground.<sup>(15B)</sup>

“It is rather difficult to know to what to attribute

the increased frequency with which the sherry bottle becomes the object of interest in legal business. Some solicitors, we believe, consider the offer of a glass of sherry to the client as necessary as advice, and whether this arises out of a public demand, or an idea of expediency on the part of the profession, it is hard to say. In the chambers of a few barristers, the sherry bottle, and even the beer barrel, play an important part, the beer barrel being reserved for attorneys' clerks in criminal cases."

It is impossible for me to contradict these serious charges. My own experience however, does not confirm them. It has been my fate more than once in my life to fall for a day, away from home, into society which indulged in the practices described: generally I should be much surprised to be offered a drink by a merchant, solicitor, or barrister, whom I had visited on business: unless indeed he were taking a lunch.

I should be far less wonderstruck at receiving such an invitation from a literary man: and if the City men had to describe the author-class, they might use darker colours. Authorship often grows out of a nervous, excitable temperament; and sometimes, though less frequently, out of a thoughtful, reflective cast of mind, inconsistent with hourly attention to uninteresting details. In the one case there is frequent exhaustion which craves for stimulants or narcotics, often mitigated, fortunately, by smoking: in the other case there are idle hours and days which also have their danger. Both classes use their brains too much and their hands too little. Most literary men too, are procrastinating, and are



periodically urged to over-exertion by the printer's cry for copy. If we applied to authors the test I have quoted above, we should hear from medical men familiar with them, that disease and premature death were rife among them.

I repeat then, that I express no opinion as to the extent of concealed drinking among the educated classes. It may be greater or less than it was formerly. The facts are inaccessible.

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The drunkenness however, generally complained of, is mostly that of the lower classes, over whom philanthropists exercise a spontaneous watchfulness which is endured with an amazing patience. It was the labouring classes that Archbishop Manning had in his eye <sup>(16)</sup> four years ago, when he bitterly though falsely lamented that we had got worse during thirty years. Indeed it seems that it was a certain small portion of them: viz. the Roman Catholics, that is the Irish immigrants into London: for he speaks of his own experience, and tells us that through his influence a particular St. Patrick's day was kept without the usual excesses: and he rejoices over a "Saturday Night Association" as restraining Roman Catholics from wasting their wages in taverns.

The sum annually spent on fermented liquors is wonderful. In 1793, <sup>(17)</sup> Mr. Ruggles calculated that 19 millions £ a year was spent by six millions and a quarter of labouring poor: or more than £3 each person. Some deduction may be made for the error of Mr. Ruggles, as I think, in underestimating the population: on the other hand, the times were rather

hard, and left less than usual for superfluous expenditure.

Let us come to recent years. In 1850, <sup>(18)</sup> Mr. G. R. Porter reckoned the cost of British and Colonial spirits, as sold by the retailer, to be for England upwards of . . . . . 8 millions £  
 for Scotland „ . . . . . 6 „  
 for Ireland „ . . . . . 6 „  
 making altogether . . . . . nearly 21 „  
 Brandy he found to cost . . . . . 3 „  
 The cost of beer he set down as upwards  
 of . . . . . 25 millions £  
 Total . . . . . 49 millions £

In the same paper he calculated the sums spent on tobacco and snuff as . . . 7½ millions £

The well known Mr. Clay of Preston, <sup>(19)</sup> after remarking on the innumerable cases of drunkenness in the north of England, says that these render credible the calculation that in the United Kingdom the amount spent in intoxicating liquors is . . . . . 65 millions £  
 “Ten times the usual amount of the English poor-rates!”

Mr. Smiles <sup>(20)</sup> lately made a calculation for the year 1868; and concluded that the expenditure on spirits and beer was not less than . . . 74 millions £ that is in round numbers £2. 10s. 0d. a head of the whole population, or nearly . . . . . £3 a head of the working classes. Adding wine and tobacco, he arrives at an annual expense of 100 millions £ or £13 for every adult *male* in the United Kingdom. “A hundred millions sterling a year on drink and tobacco! Yet we profess to be an economical and

reforming people, canvassing every item of national expenditure down even to the pen-nibs in the public offices, and the wages of the dockyard labourers."

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It is surprising to find that we spend on fermented liquors as much as we spend on wheaten bread, and as much as we have to pay for all the expenses of the general government including the interest on our vast debt. But it must occur to everyone to ask, whether the cost is to be regarded as vicious waste like an outlay on gambling: or as a superfluous expense like the purchase of fine clothes and showy horses: or as partly a means of maintaining health and vigour.

Benjamin Franklin<sup>(21)</sup> in his practical way abstained altogether, and treated as a verbal quibble the maxim of his brother compositors in London, that a man to be strong must have strong beer: he classed the phrase as we class those other phrases, a rich country must have a rich standard of money, and he who drives fat oxen should himself be fat. Franklin told his brother artisans, that a penny loaf contained as much nutriment as many pennyworths of ale. As a prudent, ambitious artisan, he preferred the money to the enjoyment.

Franklin's companions were heavy toppers, and had small reason for surprise on observing that the *Water-American* was stronger than they were. Drinking at work and drinking after work are different habits. One of the pressmen began before breakfast and only ended in the evening, taking three quarts of ale daily.

“I thought it a detestable custom: but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer in order that he might be *strong* to labour. I endeavoured to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer, could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread, and therefore if he could eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer.

Franklin's physiology was far from being equal to his prudence.

Horace Walpole (Lord Orford) was also a water-drinker, though the cost of wine cannot have deterred a bachelor with £6,000 a year.<sup>(22)</sup> It is remarkable that neither of these men escaped by his temperance, the prevalent disorder, gout.

Even if alcoholic drinks were simply harmless, there would be a good deal to be said in their favour. The greater part, or at least a large part of most men's lives, is but a dreary affair: overwork, indifferent health, ennui, anxiety, poverty, loss of friends, besides all the ills which seemed to melancholy Hamlet enough to drive a man to make his quietus with a bare bodkin: these together or separately render harsh or bitter the stream of existence. The worn, weary, anxious man, can ill spare the cheering warmth of moderate draughts. The dogmatic teetotaler indeed tells you, that this consolation of to-day diminishes your cheerfulness to-morrow, and that the water-drinker is the only happy man at breakfast. My own experience, and I believe that of the world, flatly contradict these assertions.



Demosthenes, "the water-drinker,"<sup>(23)</sup> was long ago sneered at as peevish and morose. For myself, I have tried total abstinence for a year, I have at other times reduced my quantity gradually, and I have found that total abstinence and even a continued small allowance, unfit me for active life, and make me incapable of the bodily exercise I require for my health. Nor is my case singular. Most medical men agree as to the necessity of fermented liquors to multitudes of men and women, though there are some persons like Mr. Clay (the Prison Chaplain) to whom they are injurious and even poisonous.

So far as drinking gives an innocuous relief from the troubles of life, and still more, so far as it promotes health and strength, the large sums spent on it are not wasted. Unfortunately, a great portion of those sums is wasted, because many men and some women drink so much as to make them unfit for work at the time, crapulous next morning, and diseased in after-life.

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Our newspaper editors and our publicists of every kind, have during the last generation, so uniformly decried their own country and censured the habits of our working classes, that continental writers have naturally formed an exaggerated estimate of our excesses. When M. Le Play came to England, he assumed the truth of these opinions. The particular cases however, which he records in his *Ouvriers Européens*, do not support them. There is a Sheffield carpenter, of whom he says<sup>(24)</sup> that "the family is remarkable for temperance, for good order, and even

for something like elegance in the household. Far from being addicted to the habitual excesses of most English workmen, the husband never drinks spirits." As though the daily drink of artisans were gin and rum, liquors of which they like a taste occasionally, just as we like a glass of champagne. He finds a furnace-man in Derbyshire, though ignorant and irreligious, yet living in a moral condition superior to that of most of the inhabitants of the black country; not haunting taverns, but spending his leisure at home. M. Le Play I imagine, had a conception of English artisans as men, given to spirit drinking, and regularly everyday going from work to the tavern or ginshop.

I believe that the *Journeyman Engineer* <sup>(25)</sup> gives a rather partial picture of the condition of artisans; under which name I do not mean to include Irish hodmen or unskilled dock-labourers. The Engineer in 1867 worked in a factory which had 500 men. Among such a number he said, there were found various degrees of intemperance, from that of the confirmed drunkard to that of the man who gets "elevated" on rare occasions, "such as his own or an intimate friend's marriage, or a public banquet, at which he generally insists upon making a speech, proposing a toast, or taking some other active but uncalled-for and unappreciated part in the proceedings." This refers to a factory of 500 men. The House of Commons is a law-factory of 658 men. Are there not members there, who on festive occasions and at great banquets get "elevated," and insist on proposing toasts and making speeches ill appreciated by their companions? Nay, is not the

House of Commons in an evening, made conscious that some of its members are more lively and even more irrational after dinner than before? The Journeyman Engineer admits, as Master Engineers and as Law Makers must admit of their own classes, that intemperance is but too prevalent a vice: but he maintains, as educated men may maintain of themselves with more truth, that artisans as a class are a temperate body of men.

While many persons of the higher classes and of the middle classes, drink a great deal more than is good for them, we cannot wonder that the example is followed by artisans, who have few other pleasures. But it is not among any of these classes that most of the drunkenness occurs: this must be looked for among the unskilled labourers, among men who are little more than beasts of burden; though I must add to the sinners sailors fresh from a long voyage. The distinction between artisans and mere labourers is illustrated by the statistics of towns. The authorities of Liverpool have long desired to reform the debauched habits of their borough, and in 1866 a sub-committee was appointed to inquire into facts. Their report gave the following figures.

Number of cases of drunkards dealt with by the magistrates, to 10,000 of population.<sup>(26)</sup>

Birmingham . . . . .	43
Sheffield . . . . .	51
Halifax . . . . .	57
Rochdale . . . . .	81
Leeds . . . . .	83
Manchester and Salford . . .	86
Liverpool . . . . .	303

Birmingham is preëminently a town of artisans, with comparatively few unskilled labourers, and little of that great machinery which requires thousands of mere tenders and watchers. Liverpool at the other end of the list has few manufactures, and employs tens of thousands of men who have bodily vigour and nothing else. The Liverpool drunkenness is merely the disgusting symptom of a low popular condition. Towns differ in this respect just as in other important habits. See how these people live at home. In Birmingham every family has a separate house: inhabited cellars are unknown. But in Liverpool, says a relieving officer, "I have often found nine in a cellar, or room. I have even found two families living in a cellar, and in a deep cellar—one not in accordance with the Act of Parliament. . . . There was the case of a woman living in St. Martin Street, who applied for relief, about which I had to make inquiries. I found she had been overcrowding her house, and six cases of fever had occurred there. There was even a bed on the table and one underneath it, besides another in a small closet, a sort of coal-cellar under the stairs."

I do not wonder that the Liverpool magistrates, seeing on a Monday morning 200 or 250 drunkards brought before them, were moved to make inquiries, to try unlimited tavern licences (absurd as the scheme was), to solicit the closing of public houses on Sundays, to listen to every possible or impossible plan of reformation. But the truth is apparent: sudden cure is not to be had. Education? Why an investigation lately showed that nearly as many persons could write their names in Liverpool as in



Birmingham. Religion? The swarming Irish in Liverpool are far more under the influence of religion than are the Birmingham artisans, who for the most part scarcely frequent a place of worship.

Comparatively speaking, skilled artisans are sober: but the backward, ill paid, unskilled labourers are drunken, and will continue so I fear, as long as they are ill fed, ill clothed, ill lodged, capable of few besides sensual pleasures, and unprovided with higher occupations.

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These remarks apply to England especially: the cases of Scotland and Ireland are different, both having whiskey instead of beer for their principal beverage. This has always been reckoned a disadvantage, because as ardent spirits are the more maddening whereas malt liquor is more stupifying, the whiskey drinkers might be expected to rush into more crimes of violence and ferocity. It is said that crimes of violence are proportionately more common in Scotland than in England; but in fact, the administration of justice and the classification of crime are so different in the two countries, that exact comparison is impossible. We may say this much however. The Scottish peasantry are far better instructed than the English; and this has been the case for generations: we might have anticipated in consequence, a superior mildness of manners, though we do not find it. The use of whiskey may partly account for the failure of the maxim imprinted on our minds by the Eton grammar, that mental culture softens the minds of men and forbids savagery.

Spirits again, are said to be more injurious than beer to bodily health. Probably this is the case in the mild climate of England. But we must suppose that this is not so in the colder and damper climate of Scotland, since we find that the death-rate of Scotland is not higher than that of England.

What are the comparative habits of the educated classes in Scotland at present, I cannot say. An eminent government inspector tells me that thirty years ago, when he visited widely on his tours, the upper classes were as sober as the same classes in England, but that among the middle classes he had seen, what he had never seen in England, a guest drunk at a dinner-party. An intimate friend of my own, an Edinburgh man by birth and education, told me that at about the same time his countrymen drank far more deeply than mine: and that the men kept up the old practice of adjourning from a dinner-party to a tavern. I find also, that at that time, and long since, the getting *fou* was regarded as so venial that a popular clergyman might safely indulge in it. When an Elder was talked of in a parish, the question asked about him was not, "is he sober?" but "is he quiet in his drink?" I hear however, that after the great ecclesiastical disruption, the Free Church made a great and partly successful effort to stem the tide of whiskey.

As regards the lower classes, we have lately seen<sup>(27)</sup> that in Edinburgh they are not yet converted to temperance; the numbers of persons charged by the police with drunkenness being very considerable in 1868, in the large parish of St. Cuthbert's. The Forbes Mackenzie Act, introduced into the House of

Commons 20 years ago,<sup>(28)</sup> has not regenerated the people, any more than the efforts of the Liverpool magistracy have produced that effect among the dock-labourers.

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Ireland has long been noted for its love of whiskey. If anyone doubts this, let him recall the year 1833, when Father Theobald Mathew devoted himself to the task of reclaiming his countrymen. The immediate success was amazing; crowds took the temperance pledge; drinking houses disappeared; distilleries were closed; illicit stills were pitched into the bog-pools. There was of course a relapse: but some permanent good was effected. Sir Morton Peto says <sup>(28A)</sup> that formerly, nothing was to be had in Ireland but whiskey, but that now there is a greatly increased consumption of tea and ale. He acknowledges that the damp climate makes the drinking of spirits comparatively harmless.

Morally however, it seems very injurious, <sup>(28B)</sup> as stimulating the naturally irascible temperament of the people. Common assaults are not very far from twice as numerous in Ireland as they are in England. It is a creditable peculiarity however, that aggravated assaults on women and children are far less frequent there than here.

The facts I have mentioned are confirmed by the returns of the revenue departments. The general Assembly of Ulster too, <sup>(28C)</sup> has stated that for several years after 1863, there was a steady increase of all kinds of drinking. English ale and beer are largely imported.

Some unthinking teetotallers might expect to find the amount of crime varying with the amount of drinking. The facts must disappoint them.<sup>(28D)</sup> Even "outrages," the most probable crimes under the influence of drink, vary from many causes. The outrages reported to the Constabulary Office for Ireland excluding Dublin District, were highest in the frightful famine year 1847, and reached 20,000. In 1866, (nearly twenty years later) they fell to less than one-tenth, viz. 1,964. In 1870 they had risen again to more than double, viz. 4,351. Even this number was less than a fourth of that of the famine year. And if anyone should triumphantly point out that in fact crime has increased *pari passu* with drinking, I reply that in 1862, the year before the increase of drinking began, the outrages were as numerous as in 1870. During the last few years, Fenianism and not drink may be charged with the augmentation of outrages.

## III.

SUCH being the habits of these islands, let us inquire what are those of other countries. We are told in loud and shrill tones that we are the drunkards of the earth: exact knowledge may perhaps dispel this opinion.

We cannot in this case appeal to statistics: I am not aware that the French for instance, have any police term answering to our "drunk and incapable;" and if they had, the condition indicated might be different and the records would probably be otherwise kept. I must refer then, to the more general observations of various authors.



I will begin with the north of Europe. There the common stimulant is a spirit distilled from potatoes, commonly called potato-brandy; though a drinker of cognac objects to the application of the name brandy to a liquor which is about as pleasant as camphorated spirits. Offensive as is the flavour a dram is habitually welcomed.

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We learn from that safe teacher Mr. Laing, that Norway consumes a great deal. We have seen how Franklin remonstrated with his brother pressman on the practice of drinking beer from sunrise to sunset. The Norwegian practice is worse. The labourers<sup>(29)</sup> get early in the morning, a dram of spirits with their oatmeal cake and butter: about nine the men generally take another glass: at dinner of course spirits again: in the afternoon the same, and again I presume, in the evening. Mr. Laing adds that the liquor being made at each farmhouse, is cheap, and at everyone's command, but that the labouring men do not abuse their opportunities while they are at work. He adds however, that the Norwegians are not a sober people. M. Le Play, writing more recently,<sup>(30)</sup> in 1845, says in his cautious way, it is probable, judging from a few facts, that drinking fermented liquors, and spirits especially, is the favourite recreation of many workmen and even of many farmer-landholders. In describing a particular family,<sup>(31)</sup> that of a cobalt smelter, he tells us that the husband has been induced by his employer to give up ardent spirits, and to use only weak beer. The existence of temperance societies in Norway

indicates habitual intemperance: doctors cannot live without disease.

On the other hand, if we are to believe Sir Morton Peto, <sup>(32)</sup> a reformation has taken place. He says that some years ago the rural population of Norway was greatly addicted to "finkle" (potato spirits), but that by the united efforts of the authorities, the clergy, and the better classes, French light wines and beer brewed by German immigrants, have superseded finkle. I confess some scepticism as to this rapid cure: I fear that as in Ireland the old, cheap spirit would regain its influence.

I conclude that Norway was, and probably is, a country in which drunkenness has held its ground, and in which ardent spirits are consumed morning, noon, and night, to an extent that no peculiarity of climate can excuse.

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I have not met with much distinct information about Sweden, though it is generally spoken of as much like Norway for drinking. M. Le Play <sup>(33)</sup> gives us a monograph of a family in the village of Danemora, the site of those celebrated mines from which we get the  $\text{L}$  iron, the finest iron known. Of this family M. Le Play says that the members have an inclination to excess in spirit drinking, but that the influence of the employer keeps them within the bounds of decency.

I was informed also by Dr. Hyman, when he was in this country, that at Gottenburg (properly Göteborg) great excesses were common. It is true that this is a seaport, and a considerable place, the

second in the kingdom as to population and trade. Dr. Hyman told me that the drunkenness was so notorious as to cause strenuous efforts to be made for its diminution. Among other schemes tried by philanthropists was one said to have had considerable success: that of buying up taverns, and putting an agent in each of them; not as in the case of London brewers for the retailing of a particular beer, and not as might be done by our temperance societies for the substitution of tea and coffee for fermented liquors; but for the discouragement of excessive drinking by bringing private interest to bear on it. This was done by giving the agent a share of the profits: a share namely of the profits on all sales of tea, coffee, tobacco, and provisions; but no share of the profits on sales of liquors.<sup>(33A)</sup>

I should be unjust if on such scanty information I should tax Sweden with the excesses which dishonour Norway, although if I did so, I should have common report to back me.

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The case of Russia is plainer to me. I have no doubt that the gentle, illiterate, superstitious serfs, have always been given to that coarse delight of intoxication which is generally irresistible to uncultured men: and that the freedmen have as yet had very insufficient time for reformation, so that their liberty has often been corrupted into gross licence.

At the beginning of this century, Malthus<sup>(34)</sup> found Russian life habitually shortened by intoxication. The Englishwoman in Russia,<sup>(35)</sup> writing within the

last twenty years, acquits the upper classes of excess, but says that among the people at large, Easter week is disgraced by numbers of drunken persons in the streets.

We have precise information as to recent years from Mr. Michell, who has enjoyed opportunities for personal observation, and is thus able to estimate and correct the statistics he gives.<sup>(36)</sup> He tells us that the severity of the climate causes a desire for internal warmth, and that this has probably given rise to the predominant thirst. He says that the numerous holidays furnish opportunities for indulging this, and that every birth, marriage, and death is equally available. Like Sheridan's jolly fellows, the Russians can warrant the finding an excuse for a glass.

"The Russian people are in the habit of drinking largely at church festivals, birthdays, saints' days; on the receipt of rewards, or on promotions; on the occasion of advantageous commercial speculations; at the termination of harvest; the arrival and the departure of friends. Workmen, soldiers, and sailors are equally rewarded with extra rations of corn brandy." Statistics do not teach us much unless we have some standard of comparison: yet it is startling to find that the known deaths from drunkenness in Russia during four months of 1863, were nearly 1,000, or at the rate of nearly 3,000 a year: the other sudden deaths being about four times as many.<sup>(37)</sup>

Unhappily, the vice is said to be increasing, as I have already hinted.<sup>(38)</sup>

"All these inducements to abuse of liquor already



existing, the Russian Government intend to raise once more the duty on spirits, in order not to be accused of promoting their consumption. The immense increase of drinking shops in Russia, the dismal pictures of intoxication which the streets of every town and village now afford, including the old and the young, and irrespective of sex, certainly call loudly for some legislation by which the evil of drunkenness may be reduced within the narrowest limits, regardless of the interest of the imperial exchequer."

I find again,<sup>(39)</sup> that the *Northern Post*, the organ of the Russian Minister of the Interior, declares the consumption of alcoholic drinks in the empire, to have doubled since 1863, the date of my figures above. It is curious however, that the sudden deaths caused by it were still under 3,000 in 1868. At Moscow, according to the police returns, the men and women arrested for drunkenness were in 1842, 7,224; in 1863, 21,794.

Remembering however, the habitual mendacity of statistics, I concede that these allegations as to increase, require confirmation. But I cannot doubt that Russian drinking has the very formidable character which might be expected among an uncultivated people, thinly scattered, under a severe climate.

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That a good deal of drinking goes on in Germany, will not be disputed. Even the University students have not given up their detestable practice of drowning themselves in beer. It cannot be a matter

of surprise therefore, that the lower classes are as yet far from temperate. Here is an example from M. Le Play.<sup>(40)</sup> It is that of an artisan in a half-rural factory at Solingen.

The family are Calvinists, of no great religious fervour, but going regularly to church, and receiving the holy communion the stipulated once a year. They are of irreproachable morals. Their only faults are excessive love of good cheer and of strong liquors: the eldest son, many years a Prussian soldier, has decided habits of intemperance. In the house the ordinary drink is coffee, and even at meals no fermented liquor is taken; but on the other hand, the men and their neighbours of the same condition, haunt taverns, and consume each of them as much as a bottle of spirits a week, besides beer and wine: a large allowance.

The recent Franco-Prussian war however, ought to teach us more as to the ordinary German habits. An army, in possession of a conquered country, cannot be prevented from indulging its passions at the expense of the 'unfortunate natives. The English army in the Peninsula plagued the Duke of Wellington by its drunkenness, not to be controlled by the firmest discipline and the severest punishment. The men would perform their duties: they would keep watch, and unlike the Spaniards, would fight even on an empty stomach, and fight with a stubbornness unsurpassed. But off duty, drink they would have: they would buy it, beg it, and in spite of the provost-marshal, steal it. It was hard after Salamanca or Vittoria, to shoot for pilfering a bold fellow whose face was still grimy with the smoke of battle: but the Duke was peremptory.

Now the Germans in France do not appear to have thus disgraced themselves. At the beginning of the invasion they seem to have behaved excellently in every respect. As time wore on, and villages fell under their absolute control, they gave way to the temptations of despotic power, and did many cruel things: for small offences they enacted widespread punishment; to avenge themselves on a bully who escaped they fell upon the innocent; they burnt a village as a reprisal for the murder of a comrade. But these were military executions, performed by the orders of officers: they were not private wrongs inflicted to gratify individual passion for drink and other sensuality.

It is notorious no doubt, that the English army in Spain and the German army in France were differently composed: the former being recruited from the dregs of the population, and consisting of dare-devils fit food for powder; the latter comprising all ranks of the people. If the difference between the two armies as to drinking were small, this diverse composition might account for it. But the difference was not small. In Spain the English army had its health seriously damaged by its debauchery. This was proved by the Pyreneean campaign which preceded the deceptive peace of 1814, when the absence of wine restored the bodily health of the men, although they were exposed to the rigour of a mountain climate, and that without the protection of the greatcoats which were not sent from England though repeatedly pressed for by the Duke.

Drinking and pilfering for drink were the curse of the English army. The Germans in France showed

that ordinary citizens were not slaves to the vice of intoxication.

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Switzerland of course varies in the different Cantons, sharing the habits of its neighbours outside its own boundaries: of the Germans on one side and of the French on another.

We find that in the last century, the Pays de Vaud was noted for its excesses. Dr. Price in his work on annuities,<sup>(41)</sup> quoting M. Muret, says that a great number of deaths after forty years of age were due to hard drinking; so many indeed, that as shown by the registers of mortality in one town, more persons were killed by alcohol than by all the most malignant distempers.

We have a careful account of Swiss morals at the present day, in M. Moynier's little volume, published in 1866; a volume written at the request of authority for presentation at the Paris International Exhibition.

We find<sup>(42)</sup> that among the drinks are first, beer, the consumption of which has greatly and generally increased; second, wine, which through a considerable part of German Switzerland is still a superfluity, but which is drunk in great quantities in the neighbouring districts, on the borders of the lakes of Geneva and in Neuchâtel; thirdly, cider, which is especially consumed in the Cantons of the centre and north-east, in Lucerne and on Lake Constance; while it is in Thurgau that the largest quantity is made.

Unfortunately, distilled liquors are much drunk in Switzerland; and among other districts in the



German ones, where the detestable potato spirits, or schnaps, prevail. The friends of temperance have made great efforts, and have succeeded so far as to partially introduce milder liquors. The public health however, still suffers greatly.

In another passage,<sup>(43)</sup> M. Moynier laments the prevalence of intoxication, though he confesses that a few Cantons are comparatively free from the vice. Efforts to correct it have long been made both by associations and the government. All imaginable schemes have been adopted, some with more success than others. Temperance societies, after trying over and over again, have failed and almost disappeared. Legislative measures, reduction of taverns, sermons and tracts, have made few converts: the rigour of some employers, useful as far as it goes, is confined to a small circle, besides that some of the employers set a bad example, and go so far as to make a profit by selling schnaps on credit to their workpeople, deducting the price from their wages. However, in the Cantons of Soleure, Berne, and Neuchâtel, progress has really been made. The vice is said to be growing in Geneva, and in Vaud, the Canton condemned by Dr. Price in the last century.

One cause among the Roman Catholics<sup>(44)</sup> is the great number of holidays, which though they lessen earnings, bring enforced idleness and drive men to taverns. Next day there is unfitness for work and more loss of time, so that a holiday Tuesday or Thursday ruins half the week.

Switzerland we see, stands very low in the scale of sobriety.

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Now let us come to France, the country of light wines, and as we are told of sobriety.

This excellent habit has long been attributed to France: for example by Adam Smith, who lived there a considerable time.<sup>(45)</sup>

“Though in every country there are many people who spend upon fermented liquors more than they can afford, there are always many more who spend less. It deserves to be remarked too, that, if we consult experience, the cheapness of wine seems to be a cause, not of drunkenness, but of sobriety. The inhabitants of the wine countries are in general the soberest people in Europe: witness the Spaniards, the Italians, and the inhabitants of the southern provinces of France.” Adam Smith adds as to the north of France:—

“When a French regiment comes from some of the northern provinces of France, where wine is somewhat dear, to be quartered in the southern, where it is very cheap, the soldiers, I have frequently heard it observed, are at first debauched by the cheapness and novelty of good wine; but after a few months’ residence the greater part of them become as sober as the rest of the inhabitants.”

This is not the place for discussing the question whether cheapness of fermented liquors generally, promotes sobriety. I may remark that Adam Smith’s facts relate only to the wines of France, which have little intoxicating power. He goes on to say that if in Great Britain, “the duties upon foreign wines, and the excises upon malt, beer, and ale, were taken away all at once, it might occasion a pretty general and temporary drunkenness among

the middling and inferior ranks of people, which would probably be soon followed by a permanent and almost universal sobriety." The induction seems not justified by the few facts. We are asked to believe that because the cheapness of light wine, is in certain fine and moderately warm climates *accompanied* by sobriety; therefore, the cheapness of strong ale and of ardent spirits, would in a damp and comparatively cold climate, *cause* sobriety. Potato spirit is cheap in Norway, in Switzerland, in Russia, and it is accompanied by general and abominable drunkenness.

I quoted the passage to show how long France has had the reputation of sobriety. Possibly, the revolution of '89 injured the people in this respect, as it did in some others.

My own first acquaintance with France took place rather early in the reign of Louis Philippe. Till about that time the journey from Calais to Paris took 36 hours inside a diligence, without any sleeping time allowed; but as I was fortunate enough to go by an improved line which gave a night at Amiens, I took the opportunity of staying a day to see that city. Among the many sights, I saw two drunken men staggering along in broad daylight: a spectacle which shook my faith as to Gallic sobriety. Staying in Paris and visiting the cafés, I was offered brandy as a matter of course, even in the morning: another shock to my faith.

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Since then, another practice has sprung up, that of drinking absinthe. Why this spirit should be

especially unwholesome, seems a matter of dispute, and if we are to believe a writer in the *Lancet*, it is not worse than other ardent spirit. But that the habit of drinking it is a deadly one, is beyond question. We find in the popular tales that if a stranger offers his hand to a lady, one of the questions as to his suitability is whether he is an absinthe-drinker: if he be so depraved as this, he is to be absolutely refused, whatever may be his advantages of talent, birth, and fortune. One of Edmond About's mothers says:—<sup>(46)</sup>

“We are rich enough for both, and I have never desired to see my daughter a marchioness; it is a passable nobility to be the wife of an officer. But we must learn whether this handsome unknown is a libertine, a gambler, or an absinthe-drinker. If he unluckily turned out to have one of these vices!—No, I stick to the two last; it is the wife's business to fix her husband's heart.—If he gambled, or had that unhappy way of drinking, I would break it off however desperate Antoinette might be.”

Edmond About knows his countrymen: he tells us that licentiousness, gambling, and absinthe-drinking are the vices of the day.

M. Maxime Du Camp<sup>(47)</sup> gives us some information which is not widely known in England. In an article on the manufacture of tobacco, he denies that smoking is the cause of the increase of madness in France. He says that the inference from the figures is only specious; for that if smoking were the cause, it would affect men only, whereas nearly as many women as men become insane.<sup>(47)  
53</sup>

“Besides we must admit, for the fact is too



striking to be denied, that for a score of years past France has been invaded by a distemper formerly peculiar to Sweden, Norway, and England : I mean *alcoholism*, which our army has brought with absinthe from Africa. There rather than elsewhere, must we look for the increase of mental disorders ; there is the real poison, in this raw liquor, violent from its 72 degrees of alcohol, which burns, destroys, and so disorganizes the body that M. Renard, a military surgeon at Batna, has found on the skull of absinthe-drinkers traces of exfoliation and transparent depressions. It is this fluid verdigris which causes meningitis, brutishness, maniacal fury, every deterioration of the brain. It is not tobacco that does this ; for however prepared, it is only a mild narcotic, to which one easily gets accustomed, the moderate use of which is free from danger, and soothes us under many troubles."

I will now give the testimony of an English observer.<sup>(48)</sup> First, he tells us that in 1868, the habit of absinthe-drinking was widespread, and threatened to become as general as opium-eating in China. Stroll along the boulevards between the Madeleine and the Bastille, on a summer's afternoon, at "the absinthe hour," (5 to 6 o'clock) : you will see hundreds of persons, not foreigners, sipping this abominable stimulant. At some places, the Café de Bade for example, 45 out of 50 customers will be doing this. Go to the wine-shops in the faubourgs, the Quartier Latin, the streets round the École Militaire, you will see workmen, students, soldiers, clerks, charcoal-carriers, ragpickers, "mixing their customary draughts of emerald-tinted poison, and watching the

fantastic movements of the fluid as it sinks to the bottom of the glass; wherein it turns from green to an almost milky white."

A quarter of a century ago, the drinkers were coachmen, footmen, ragpickers: now they are also the educated and the affluent; men of letters, artists, financiers, and even women. The fumes of the enticing liquor, they say, ascend to the weary brain and give it a renewed activity, developing a world of ideas, and inspiring noble works of literature and art. The devotees however, soon find that what began as a luxury has become a necessary of life: nay worse; that the activity of thought and the inspiration have ceased to come, and stupor takes their place.

Dr. Legrand, who denounces this habit as one of the pestilences of the day, tells us that after the first dose of absinthe, you are carried in imagination away from earth into a lofty and boundless realm without horizon. You imagine yourself travelling into the infinite; "you are really drifting into the incoherent." Absinthe affects the brain differently from any other stimulant; it produces neither the heavy drunkenness of beer, nor the furious inebriation of spirits, nor the exhilarating intoxication of wine. It is an ignoble poison; before destroying life, brutalizing its victims and turning them into idiots.

The drinkers are of two classes. The one class after a short initiation, take large quantities, and delirium soon follows. The other limit themselves to small but regular doses: they are none the less doomed. The first form of intoxication is noisy: it lasts longer than that caused by wine or brandy:

it is followed by extreme depression and languor. After a time the power of digestion is weakened; the appetite is gone; intense thirst prevails. Then follow morbidness, causeless anxiety, giddiness, and towards evening hallucinations of sight and hearing. There are the fixed ideas and the madness of delirium tremens.

The habitual and comparatively moderate drinker is dragged more slowly into the abyss. He begins with suffering from involuntary contractions of the muscles about the lips and face, together with tremblings in the arms, hands, and legs. Then come numbness and tingling, and physical weakness. Baldness follows; the complexion becomes cadaverous, the flesh disappears: the man tends to a living skeleton, to death in life. In the night he has painful dreams and nightmare; in the day time, giddiness, headache, hallucinations, delirium, stammering, paralysis, followed at last by death.

Notwithstanding these fatal effects, visible to all, Paris has a few absinthe-clubs, the members of which are pledged to be faithful to their poison, and who meet for the purpose of drinking it. In the army and navy its use has been found so fatal that it has been forbidden, and the strictest vigilance has been exercised to keep it away, but of course with little success in Paris.

That the consumption of this mortal poison is large, is proved by official figures. An enormous quantity is made in Paris, and besides this, another kind of almost double intoxicating power, is imported from Switzerland to the extent of two million gallons a year.

A writer in the *Lancet*,<sup>(49)</sup> remarking on these statements, denied that absinthe could produce the effects alleged any more than other ardent spirits, because the plant absinthe or wormwood he said, is innocuous. To this it was replied that Pereira thirty years ago gave the following description, in his *Elements of Materia Medica*, (2nd Edition, p. 1350) :

“*Artemisia absinthium* (common wormwood)—physiological effects: *in moderate doses* it produces the ordinary effects of the *aromatic bitter tonics*. Its bitter principle becomes absorbed: hence the flesh and milk of animals fed with it are rendered bitter. Borrich says that milk rendered bitter by it proves *noxious* to the infant. *Large* doses irritate the stomach and excite the vascular system. A specific influence over the nervous system, characterized by headache, giddiness, &c. has been ascribed to it. This has usually been supposed to depend on the volatile oil, but a similar power has been assigned to the bitter principle.”

Under any circumstances one would pay little attention to a writer who denies the possibility of phenomena, the existence of which is proved by direct testimony. But it seems that absinthe, as sold, contains other ingredients besides wormwood and ardent spirits.<sup>(50)</sup>

“Genuine absinthe is distilled from the leaves of major and minor absinthe, angelica roots, calamus aromaticus, aniseed, dittany leaves, and wild marjoram . . . Occasionally fennel, mint, &c., enter into the composition. The utmost care is taken to obtain the right shade of colour, and to insure the liquid expanding and whitening well when mixed



with water. Should it prove to be deficient in these qualities, the manufacturer does not hesitate to add indigo, hyssop, nettles, and even to have recourse to sulphate of copper to obtain the precise tint of green, or chloride of antimony to produce the milky white precipitate: both of these chemicals being deadly poisons."

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Light wines then, have given way to ardent spirits of the most fatal kind: or rather, this poison has been added; for the wine still drunk in Paris, costs the consumers  $7\frac{1}{2}$  millions £ a year,<sup>(51)</sup> besides  $\frac{1}{2}$  million £ for beer; making 8 millions £; an amount twice as great as that supposed to be spent on all kinds of drink, by an equal population throughout England, Ireland, and Scotland.

The evidence which I have offered as to absinthe drinking had especial reference to the educated classes of Paris. Let us now see what can be proved as to the working classes.

I mentioned incidentally that absinthe is consumed, and has long been consumed by grooms, footmen, and ragpickers. We cannot wonder that cab drivers share the habit. In an article on the public conveyances of Paris,<sup>(52)</sup> we learn that the drivers may be divided into three classes. First, the good ones, who take kindly to their business, who love their horses, who save their earnings and amass a little capital with which to become owners as well as drivers, who study the legal regulations and conform to them, and sometimes earn rewards for honesty.

Then come the drunkards, victims of their passion for liquor, who after setting down a passenger, rush to the tavern and drink a *canon*. They half lose their senses, and nothing but the long habit of driving saves them from fatal accidents. Those who do not become savage in their liquor, are not bad fellows. They are saints in their sickness, and are sinners the next day. They are careful of their horses, and there is even a proverb, "a drunkard's horse is never lean."

The last class is worse; it consists of so called *bohemians*. These men are intractable and sometimes dangerous: whip is their favourite argument. They are the waifs and strays of the world; the idle, the discontented, the incorrigible. It is among them that Bishop Wilberforce would have to look for the 750 priests whom he declared to be cab drivers in Paris, or for the half-dozen acknowledged to be such: and in the same class, if anywhere, would be found the English clergymen said to be driving in London.<sup>(53)</sup> It is among them that you will find the numerous university men who have fallen into hopeless poverty.

"There are refractory priests among the drivers of Paris, that is unquestionable; but they are very few; and I can say on authority, that during twelve years only one has offered himself for registration. The *bacheliers ès lettres* however, abound; and from their driving-seat they may say, reverting to their college days:—

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

These are the men who seize their opportunity of

tossing off their glass of absinthe, which they call in their slang, *étrangler un perroquet*.

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But cabdrivers are men peculiarly exposed to temptation. In fine weather they may sit or loll about for hours with nothing to do: in cold and wet weather they are pinched and numbed with frost and damp. A glass of liquor to relieve their ennui and warm their inside, is excusable. This drinking however, is not confined to them. Among the people, says M. Maxime Du Camp,<sup>(54)</sup> the love of fermented liquors is too wide-spread: men live from hand to mouth, without dreaming of a to-morrow: they spend in an evening the earnings of a week: they forget their house and their children, and lay by nothing for sickness and bad times. Public charity has to intervene.

This improvidence is no novelty. Thirty years ago,<sup>(55)</sup> M. Frégier, in a work on the dangerous classes of great towns, draws a picture of the recklessness of French artisans. One of these men, he says, rises before daylight and sets off towards his workshop. He meets an old companion, long absent: the first words of both are "let us have a glass together." They go into a tavern, and glass in hand, talk of their work, and their masters with their ignorance, stinginess, and irregularity in paying wages. Each of the friends has to "stand his turn." One now finds himself too late and has to lose a third of the day; he persuades the other to stay, and the day is gone; and possibly the next day also.

Such are the bad habits of Paris. Now let us see

what is said by the trustworthy M. Louis Reybaud,<sup>(56)</sup> as to the north of France generally. He tells us that while other kinds of dissipation occupy an inferior place in the workman's estimation, the first place belongs unquestionably to the gross and widespread vice of intoxication. This vice is met with elsewhere, but the north is its true home. The people are tractable, industrious, highly skilled: the one defect of drunkenness taints their virtues and neutralizes their efforts; and this to an incredible degree. This love of fermented liquors (just as in Adam Smith's time) is almost unknown in the south, is moderate in the central region, but is extravagant in the north. The workman once seized with it, is irreclaimable, and seems blind to its consequences: tempted at first by others, he ends a madman or a brute.

Go and watch the workmen coming out of the factory on a pay-day. Some of the wives are waiting to see what they can snatch from their husbands' orgies. A few get enough to supply the week's bread: others are induced to go to the tavern with their husbands or their lovers, and share their wine and beer till all are intoxicated: imitating the Regent Duc d'Orléans, who drank nightly with his daughter till both were intoxicated, at the fashionable *petits soupers* of the time.<sup>(57)</sup> A third class of wives, scolded and ill treated, maintain the contest, follow the men to the tavern, and stand or sit half through the night, in hopes of saving something from their husbands' cards and wine. "Such is the great and deep sore of the industrial classes."

A writer in the *Journal des Économistes*<sup>(58)</sup> says



much the same, though he is more hopeful as to the future. He declares that in the present century family life among workmen, has been dissolved by two vices: libertinage among women, and drunkenness among men. These still prevail: in Normandy, in the north, in Alsace, at St. Étienne, drunkenness is unsubdued. The south has always escaped it, and at Lyons it is exceptional. The local administration exercises an almost absolute authority over taverns and *cafés*, which cannot be opened, sold, or removed, without the consent of the prefect, who also can close them at his pleasure. The number of these places has nevertheless multiplied. Drunkenness however, has not increased but perhaps diminished: coffee has rather gained on wine, and in Paris billiards attract more artisans than formerly; possibly not to the advantage of their pockets.

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Now take particular towns: Roubaix, Sedan, Rheims, Elboeuf, Mulhouse.

Roubaix<sup>(59)</sup> is on the borders of Belgium, and has no less than 12,000 Flemings among its inhabitants: its houses share the profusion of Belgian images: the men marry early and are correct in their morals. But sobriety is not the popular virtue. On Sundays and holidays you may see the people crowding into the taverns, of which there is one to every hundred souls. Drinking is uninterrupted from after morning service till night: beer follows gin, gin follows beer. Not that after all the aggregate consumption of the year is nearly so large as that of some other towns: the misfortune is that the liquor is taken in large

doses instead of being distributed over the week, and that many persons get into such a condition as to require assistance in returning home. The pleasure is that of a rather ignorant and coarse people, ill fed and ill lodged.

It is agreeable to find a better account of another town, much in our mouths of late as the scene of a terrible disaster to France: I mean Sedan. A witness says of it that the workmen are not addicted to taverns, and that drunken men are seldom seen.<sup>(60)</sup> They are said to be distinguished for self-respect and a certain dignity, as well as for personal neatness and well ordered homes.

M. Louis Reybaud himself found Sedan far superior to other manufacturing towns, and comparatively remarkable for sobriety. This was not so formerly. But the manufacturers combined together to put down excessive drinking: they refused to employ notorious sinners: after a long struggle they had great success. But certain workmen gave them much trouble, and a particular case may serve as an example.

Old Joseph was a working fuller, and was sixty when the temperance revolution broke out. He was an inveterate sot. Standing all day with a douche about his ears, he applied the strongest antidotes during the evening to the water he worked in and hated. An excellent workman and with many admirable qualities, he refrained from the tavern, and to avoid bad example to his children waited for his liquor till they were in bed.

The manufacturers had agreed together to employ no drunkards. But what was to be done in this

case? To dismiss an old and faithful servant would have been barbarous. Joseph's employer sent for him, and declared the law. The man got on his high horse, said he had a right to do as he pleased, swore he would drink double in defiance of such tyranny. Calming down he agreed to a compromise, and with him a promise was sacred. After long negociation and much grumbling, it was agreed that Joseph should drink only on Sundays and holidays, but on those days as much as he pleased. This went on for a year, and then the employer thought he might tighten the bond. One Sunday a month, not a day more! More dispute and grumbling, and a second capitulation. Another year passed, and then Joseph was told, that he must submit to absolute temperance or dismissal. But his health would suffer: drinking was necessary as a tonic: he should lose his present vigour and sink into decrepitude. The dispute lasted an hour, and when Joseph was all but wearied out, he bethought him of the saint of his craft. He was resolute to get drunk once a year, and this last favour was conceded.

How like an English struggle, except as to the employer's concession of Sunday for a drinking day! A pleasanter case came under my observation. One day at Oxford, on one of my many agreeable visits to the Political Economy Club, I saw an old man at a window, and I was told that he had been a notorious drunkard, but had become a teetotaller. Near the door of a tavern one day, some companions tempted him with a can of foaming beer, and pressed him to take it. At last he yielded, took the can and poured the beer into the gutter.

Sedan is an exceptional town, rescued from vice by artificial means, generally impossible. Rheims is not so fortunate.<sup>(61)</sup>

The workmen's habits are irregular: they frequent the *café* and the tavern, and there spend their surplus earnings. While wine was cheap they kept to it, but the failure of the vines has thrown them upon ardent spirits to their great damage. The manufacturers have tried coercive measures, but in vain. *Cafés* and taverns still form the popular amusement.

At Elbœuf again, the same habits prevail. Among the adult workmen, the average consumption of ardent spirits is 50 to 60 litres a year each, or 60 to 70 of our wine bottles, an excess on the large consumption of Solingen, supposing the spirits of equal strength. We cannot be surprised to find that the workmen's strength fails early through the unwholesome character of their employment, aggravated by drinking and debauchery.

I have relied principally on M. Louis Reybaud for my account of Roubaix, Sedan, Rheims, and Elbœuf. For Mulhouse I will turn to M. Eugène Véron.<sup>(62)</sup>

The working population of Mulhouse, says M. Véron, has one defect which paralyses its best intentions, and one vice which demoralizes and consumes it. The defect is improvidence; the vice is drunkenness. Thanks to the one the future is forgotten; thanks to the other it is ruined beforehand. The vice has been often attacked, but never conquered. Teetotalism has been adopted in England and America, but not in France; where indeed, it would probably fail. The manufacturers have been reminded of Sedan,



where the vice has been extirpated or driven into concealment, but this as the result of a singular union and constancy not generally attainable. Get the workmen to be frugal, educate them, give them higher pleasures, and they will reform themselves.

Mulhouse then, is a prey to drunkenness, just as are Roubaix, Rheims, and Elbœuf.

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But is this vice peculiar to towns? Is it the result of confined space, bad air, corrupt association and frequent opportunity? Go into the villages among the weavers: they are much the same as townsmen.

The morals of the village weavers, says M. Louis Reybaud,<sup>(63)</sup> are not what one would wish. Certainly, in the agricultural provinces, the habits are sounder, the drinking is less. The labourers remain more steadily at home, while the weavers constantly visit the towns to receive their materials and take home their work, and naturally making a tavern their starting place, they there learn unfortunate lessons.

But we must not believe that drinking is unknown among the rustics. M. Le Play<sup>(64)</sup> in 1848 describing the life of a day labourer in Maine, says that his principal amusement was taking coffee, wine, and spirits in the taverns of his own or neighbouring villages, at fairs and on market-days. The women are generally free from this habit, but are unable to restrain their husbands, whose excesses cause many privations to their families. The better class of labourers and the small farmers, are addicted to bowls and shooting at a mark; amusements enlivened with wine.

A writer of the highest authority, M. Léonce de Lavergne,<sup>(65)</sup> in his *Studies on Rural Economy* written in 1868, says of the country about Flers, that the population is religious and moral, except that there are still complaints of the crying vice of drunkenness. Good advice and good examples however, are not wanting, and hopes are entertained of conquering or at least restraining the enemy.

An anonymous writer in 1869 described<sup>(66)</sup> a village with which he was intimately acquainted. Its affairs consisted mainly of hard work in the fields and the barn, with the occasional and exciting business of a sale of plots of land. Now and then there was a marriage with strenuous feasting and dancing. The communal council appears to meet once a week. "Two of our villagers are members, and the labours of local government seem to be not entirely ascetic, if one may judge from the happy state in which these gentlemen return home, supporting each other with an arm round the neck of each, and smiling radiantly on the passers by." The writer was evidently thinking of Mr. Pickwick.

A discussion of this subject has lately taken place at the Paris Academy of Medicine.<sup>(66A)</sup> M. Jeannel stated that he had had long experience of the habits of French soldiers; and that he deeply regretted the laxity of discipline as to drinking. During the fatal Prussian war just ended, he saw the troops as they passed through the towns or the railway stations, plied with drink until numbers of them were intoxicated. The officers connived at the practice; looking at it as a consolation to the soldier, under the fatigues, privations, and hardships he had to bear:

they often accepted a state of drunkenness as an apology for breaches of discipline. At every halt the men were permitted to rush to the cabarets, and to buy bottles of spirits from ragged girls. Just before an action, some of the generals made copious distributions of brandy.

The Assembly at Versailles has had the matter under consideration; <sup>(66B)</sup> and a measure has been introduced for restraining the sale of liquors, on principles similar to those of Mr. Bruce's Licensing Bill.

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After reading these various accounts, it is impossible to believe that France is a sober country, except in the southern provinces. Adam Smith has left it on record that in his time the northern French were addicted to drink, though they left it off after being settled for a certain time in the south: an improvement attributable he thought to the cheapness of wine, but which I must maintain to be more probably caused by the gentle influence of the climate.

In Paris we see that absinthe is poisoning scores of thousands of all classes: lifting them for an instant into a heaven of delight, to precipitate them soon into an abyss of degradation. The same ardent spirit has corrupted the army and the navy, and is forbidden in barracks and on shipboard. The cabdrivers many of them drink on every occasion, and sit on their box reins in hand, driving by habit like somnambulists. In the manufacturing towns drunkards swarm; and if Sedan is at present reformed, that improvement is, like Alexander of

Russia, a happy accident; probably like Father Mathew's reformation in Ireland, to a great extent temporary.

In the villages of handloom woollen weavers there are the same pernicious habits. If the country labourers are not so bad, they are far from sober; and the better class together with the small farmers, accompany their bowls and shooting with draughts of wine; and the reverend fathers of the communal council return home smiling and supported like Mr. Pickwick after the election.

Where is the boasted sobriety of France? Whence comes its drunkenness, in despite of its fine climate, and its comparatively southern latitude throughout?

#### IV.

WE must infer from these numerous facts that Great Britain has no monopoly of the vice of excessive drinking. It is too true that many of our people in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, still indulge in the habit: but it is evident that we share it with Scandinavia, with Russia, with Switzerland, and even with France which has had a traditional reputation for sobriety.

If we cross the Atlantic we do not escape the evil. In the absence of direct evidence, the history of the Maine law would be enough to convince us of this; for men do not propose and persist in an heroic remedy for any but an inveterate disease. It is now about 35 years since the *teetotallers* became an influential party in the United States. Captain Marryatt in 1839 gave this account.<sup>(67)</sup>



“ The legislature of Massachusetts, which State is the stronghold of the Society, passed an act last year, by which it prohibited the selling of spirits in a smaller quantity than fifteen gallons, intending thereby to do away with the means of dram-drinking at the groceries, as they are termed ; a clause, however, permitted apothecaries to retail smaller quantities, and the consequence was that all the grog-shops commenced taking out apothecaries’ licenses. That being stopped, the *striped pig* was resorted to ; that is to say, a man charged people the value of a glass of liquor to see a striped pig, which peculiarity was exhibited as a sight, and when in the house, the visitors were offered a glass of spirits for nothing. But this act of the legislature has given great offence, and the State of Massachusetts is now divided into two very strange political parties, to wit, the *topers* and the *teetotallers* ! ”

Marryatt heard, perhaps embellished, an anecdote about an old Dutch innkeeper, who was persuaded whilst drunk, to take the temperance oath and sign a paper. Next morning, learning what he had done, he determined to keep his oath. He fell ill however, and his physician ordered him an ounce of French brandy daily. Looking at the prescription, he wondered how much an ounce of brandy was ; and as none of his friends could tell him, he dispatched his son to the schoolmaster. The boy brought word back that an ounce avoirdupois was sixteen drachms. The old fellow was delighted : formerly he had taken only twelve *drams* a day ; henceforth he would take sixteen.

Since that time we have heard much of a stricter

prohibition under the name of the Maine Law : it has been tried and abandoned, welcomed and evaded, eulogized and abused. So lately as 1869, Massachusetts again passed a law, and nearly in the original form : forbidding the retail sale of stronger liquors, but permitting that of lager beer and cider.<sup>(68)</sup>

There must be much drinking to excess to justify these pertinacious attempts at compulsion.

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That this inference is a correct one may be proved by direct evidence. Sir Morton Peto visited the United States in 1865, and gives us some precise information. He found<sup>(69)</sup> that in 1864, there were distilled no less than 88 million gallons of ardent spirits ; and that on an average of years the consumption is twice as great as that of Great Britain and Ireland. He enlarges also on the " various and enticing modes " in which those spirits are prepared, as " cocktails, juleps, slings, and twists." He says that the " Americans are by no means an intemperate people," but that they drink very large quantities of liquors unsuitable to their climate and damaging to their health.

Ohio, Illinois, and California, have lately taken to distilling a spirit they call high wine, and consume large quantities of it. In states lying under the same latitudes with Algeria or Egypt, such habits must be highly injurious : far more so than in Scandinavia or Scotland. Indeed my friends who have visited New York, Pennsylvania, and New England, assure me that the climate even there is so much more exhilarating than ours, that they could

dispense with those stimulants which in England they found necessary.

At first sight it seems that the heat of a southern climate should make men drink: so it does; but not alcohol. What you want in the tropics is coolness, and the Americans supply this want by the use of ice, the consumption of which is so great that the trade is immense.<sup>(70)</sup> Those who have not experienced the heats of summer cannot realize the pleasure of using ice. But the abundance of it deprives of all excuse those who heat their blood with fermented liquors.

Sir Morton Peto tells us that the Americans are not an intemperate people, by which I suppose, he means that they do not sit down together and get drunk in society. Better judges than he, speak less favourably.<sup>(71)</sup> In comparing the United States with England, an Englishman, a well known divine, says we are the worst: an American divine says his countrymen are the worst. The English divine, the Rev. Newman Hall, who is familiarly acquainted with the lowest classes of London, gives his verdict against us: perhaps, if he had known New York or California, he might have hesitated. The American bishop cited by Mr. Hall gives his verdict against his own country: a familiar knowledge of Liverpool or Glasgow, might have reversed his decision. Such comparisons are absurd, coming from men acquainted with only one of the things compared.

An anonymous commentator on this dispute, says that after careful inquiry, he has become convinced that among ordinary working men there is little to choose between the two countries: that if America

has more temperance men, she has also more drunkards. Perhaps we might have expected this, remembering that America has a climate in which total abstinence is much easier, but that she offers greater temptations in the cheapness of liquor, which (*pace* Adam Smith) does not promote sobriety. As regards the educated classes, the same writer expresses a decisive opinion. He says that "we find them woefully behind us in the matter of potations." The moderation of English dinner parties is an attainment of the last thirty or forty years. The Americans have not reached it: with some fortunate exceptions, they are "divided into two factions who revile and despise each other—those who drink too much, and those who do not drink at all."

The drinking too, does not take the form of genial hospitality, in a well furnished parlour and with warmth of welcome, after the day's work is done. "The unhappy English traveller first becomes acquainted with it somewhat in this manner. He walks with his friend A down Broadway. There A meets B, who has not seen B for several weeks, and who proposes a drink to commemorate their happy meeting. They go to a bar, and meet there three others whom B also treats. They sally out together and walk a little way. Then A makes the offer of a drink. B cannot refuse since A has already been treated at his expense; and so by the time that each member of the party has wiped out his trifling obligation, the English traveller finds that he has drunk more than is good for him, and suffers the next morning from one of those diabolical headaches which Bourbon whiskey alone can produce." But



to make the matter complete, A is at home a teetotaller by profession, out of deference to his wife. He asks the Englishman to dinner and gives him nothing but water till after dinner, when he offers him "a perpendicular drink (on the sly)."

If we had no other accounts but this, we might disregard it; because we have at home teetotallers who, converted to common sense or perverted to vice, are unable to get the consent of their wives to produce anything stronger than tea. But we are otherwise familiar enough with the detestable American custom of "liquoring up;" the very custom which we find so ruinous among our artisans.

Thus far then, the balance is rather in our favour: the working classes about equally vicious in the two countries; the educated classes better in England.

On the other hand we are told that our great towns have "a class which happily does not exist in the United States—a class existing on chance half-pence, and to whom drink is really the cheapest food, or rather substitute for food. The drunkenness of these poor creatures is hunger, want, and despair in disguise." The writer of this forgot for a moment, if he ever knew it, the vice and destitution of New York; and that not only among the houseless emigrants from Europe, but among the despised native men of colour: let him read Dickens's account of what he saw. He forgot also California with its bravos and bowie knives, and the western men who call their fellows a 'oss or a 'cuss, and the idle, loafing, "mean" whites of the South. Does he suppose that such brutes are more sober than our tramps and beggars?

If the Americans are really a self-controlling people, they are singularly unfortunate in their choice of representatives in both Houses. No one can have forgotten the tricks played under high heaven by a recent President, Andrew Johnson. Since that time<sup>(72)</sup> a Delaware Senator so habitually appeared in the Chamber drunk, that Mr. Sumner threatened a motion for his expulsion. A Californian Senator, now dead, was never seen sober. President Grant was accused by Mr. Wendell Phillips, but the charge was not believed by the President's friends. Senator Yates of Illinois confessed that he did get intoxicated, "but only periodically;" and he denied that he ever went to the Senate in that condition. He "frankly confessed the weakness which has borne him down," and said that during *twenty-seven years of public life* he had "often yielded to temptation, and as often suffered the pangs of unutterable remorse." These men were far worse than President Johnson, whose escapade occurred only on the day of his installation. Afterwards, during a wild trip he made in the West, he avoided further reproach, though this is more than could be said of the gentlemen who accompanied him.

I conclude that both in the commercial society of the American great towns, and in the political circles of the greater part of the country, (excluding the few more refined States) there is much habitual drunkenness.

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After this survey of the empire of alcohol, one wonders where sobriety exists. It appears that it

does exist in the south of Europe. Adam Smith we see, found it there. Lyons we are told is comparatively without reproach. Spain and Italy are the same.

As to Spain, we have two sketches by M. Le Play.<sup>(73)</sup> The first is that of a peasant farmer in Old Castile. M. Le Play takes this opportunity of making some general remarks. He says that in Spain there is not the same distinct line as in other countries, between one rank and another; a peculiarity attributed to the welding together of all classes, during the long and deadly struggle with the unbelieving Moors. Religion was a strict bond, and the name, Old Christian, was a kind of title of nobility even to a peasant.

M. Le Play confirms the statement of other authors, that the Spaniards have a singular dignity in everyday life: the rich, he says, treat their dependents without haughtiness; the indigent are civil but not servile. This decorum confirms the sober habits which are caused by climate, and partly by tradition: I should add, partly perhaps by the long felt influence of the Mahometans, themselves forbidden by the Koran to drink fermented liquors.

This Castilian family was sober: so was another family, that of a Galician miner. The latter drank a little wine in the winter evenings, and smoked a very small quantity of smuggled tobacco. The man when at the mines, which were distant from his home, never took any strong liquor to recruit his strength after his severe labour, except at Christmas, at Easter, and during the three last days of the Carnival.

Italy like Spain has a reputation for sobriety. But as in Luther's time, so now, this virtue is accompanied by many vices : the lazzaroni of Naples are notorious for their ignorance, laziness, rags, and filth ; the proletariats of Rome are disgraced by their hatred of work and passion for gambling.

"The amusements of the people<sup>(73A)</sup> are much what might be expected from their occupations. To do them justice, they drink but little ; and even at the road side *Osterias* on a Sunday you rarely see a Roman drunk. On the other hand, they are a nation of gamblers. Their chief amusement, not to say their chief occupation, is gambling. In the middle of the day, at street corners, and in sunny spots, you see groups of working men playing at pitch-halfpenny, or gesticulating wildly over the mysterious game of *moro*. Skittles and stone-throwing are the only popular amusements which require bodily exertion ; and both of them, as played here, are as much chance as skill. The lottery too, is the delight of every true Roman."

Both Spain and Italy also are addicted to the use of the knife ; a practice which would be more natural, if not more excusable, in persons heated by drinking.

There are then, sober countries : but these do not by any superior instruction, superior industry, superior morals, or superior physical condition, justify the extravagant praises heaped upon temperance by stump orators.

Why Spain, Italy, and the south of France, should be comparatively sober, while most of the remainder of Europe is the reverse, is a question not easily decided. If it is supposed that it is because of the



higher temperature of the south, I turn to other high temperatures. Calcutta is intensely hot : Europeans there do not decline beer or wine. Nor do the natives practise abstinence. Mr. Hunter tells us <sup>(74)</sup> that they have long been accustomed to over-indulgence ; that in 1780, Mrs. Fay after a few days' residence observed their immoderate love for strong drink. They did not learn it from us. "When we assumed the direct administration of the district, drunkenness was universal among the lower orders. The excessive cheapness of liquor pandered to the craving for stimulants—a craving always sufficiently strong among a semi-aboriginal population like that of Beerbhoom. Indeed, drunkenness formed so marked a feature in the Bengali character, as to be specified in ancient treaties." One of the earliest magistrates among them, just like many of our own, believed that the greater part of serious crimes were committed in consequence of drinking. Not only was liquor cheap ; it was very bad. A halfpenny (the wages perhaps of a day) purchased six quart bottles of ardent spirits. At present there is a heavy excise duty levied : the prices have risen to 6d. a quart for raisin wine, though fermented rice liquor is still sold for  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a quart ; a price not much higher, the rate of wages considered, than the old one of a halfpenny for six quarts. Excesses however, have greatly diminished. Ruffians still prime themselves with drink : but the hard-working labourers, though like labourers elsewhere, they resort to the taverns in the evening, do not commonly get beyond the condition which makes them profoundly salute everyone they meet. "Drunkenness as a regular element of crime, does not exist in Bengal." <sup>(75)</sup>

In other parts of India apparently, there was more sobriety : though we really know little of the habits of the aboriginal races which still exist by millions in the Central Provinces watered by the Godavery.<sup>(76)</sup> But the Baboo Chunder Sen on his visit to England in 1870, made it a serious charge against the English, that they had corrupted his countrymen. He said that the traffic in fermented liquors ought to be forbidden in India.<sup>(77)</sup>

“Go into the rural villages, into the small towns in the provinces, and you see homely Hindoo life in its purity and charming simplicity, a life the exact counterpart of which you will not find in any part of the globe. But where is that purity and where is that simplicity now? I have freely acknowledged that the British nation has been educating us, enlightening us, civilizing us. We have their telegraphs and railways, and all the great things introduced by modern civilization; but if you have taught us Shakespeare and Milton, I ask have you not taught us and our people the use of brandy and of beer? This poison was not once tasted by our upper or middle classes, and yet now you see a different state of things. . . . You now see scores and hundreds of young, intelligent, and educated natives of India falling away and dying victims of intemperance.”

This is a painful statement; made no doubt by a partisan at a temperance meeting; slightly coloured perhaps by an Eastern imagination. We know however, that where Europeans go among tribes less advanced than themselves, their fire-water is corrupting and deadly.

But these facts throw no light on the question why Spain and Italy are sober, and why northern Frenchmen coming southward, should in Adam Smith's days have assumed after a time the temperance of their new companions. If the greater heat were the cause, why should not the still greater heat of Hindostan secure the natives from our corrupting influence?

Other hot countries confirm the lesson we learn in India. The west coast of Africa, for example, is burning as well as pestilential: there the natives, besides the fermented date-juice, use great quantities of rum which they get in exchange for their palm-oil and ivory.

In Mexico, Humboldt tells us,<sup>(78)</sup> there is much drinking; nor does he attribute this to the example of the Spaniards. He says that the natives under European dominion live long. Peaceful cultivators, collected in villages these six hundred years, they are not exposed to the risks which attend the wandering hunters and warriors of the Mississippi. Living mostly on vegetable food, they would attain a very high longevity, but for the drunkenness which undermines their constitutions. Their liquors are spirits made from the sugar-cane, maize, and other vegetable productions, and far more the wine of the country, made from the American agave, and called *pulque*. This wine contains so much undecomposed sugar that with the addition of a little food it will support life for a long time. Taken in moderation it is even wholesome. The Indians drink these liquors to excess, but not to the extent some persons have believed. In the forests of

Guiana and on the Orinoco, Humboldt met natives who turned from ardent spirits with disgust. In Mexico, the capital of new Spain, on the other hand, the police have tumbrils regularly sent round to collect the "drunk and incapable," who are imprisoned and sent into the streets as scavengers for three days: many of them return to prison within the week of their release. These unfortunate creatures, who resemble the lower animals in their coarseness, can only be cured by gradual cultivation.

Persia again, another hot country, has never been ignorant of the illicit pleasures of drinking. Herodotus says<sup>(79)</sup> that in his time, the Persians were moderate at their meals, but ate of many after dishes. They were much addicted to wine: they debated the most important affairs when intoxicated, but reconsidered them when they were sober. On the other hand, decisions come to on water, were talked over again on plenty of wine. At the present day, according to Morier's Hajji Baba, a Persian delights to recline in his garden and drink his fill.<sup>(80)</sup>

v.

THESE facts must remind us of the conclusion familiar to most of us, that drinking to excess is no new fault: that it was known to the family of Noah, to the Persians before Herodotus, to the Greeks and the Romans. It appears that it was not the fashionable vice of England until after our long wars in the Low Countries, which are chargeable with having introduced the practice of drinking-



bouts. This fashion has disappeared from among the educated classes: gamblers, low sporting men, adventurers, beggars, still practise it, but in educated society it is almost unknown. Men of all classes are to be found who indulge privately, who morbidly or madly crave for a stimulant, who will drink though they die for it. But the long sitting after dinner, the choice port, the next day's sickness, have gone from us.

It is with the working classes that the temperance advocates are carrying on their struggle: a noble struggle; though disfigured by much moral intemperance, dogmatism, extravagance, and injustice: by impossible aims and unjustifiable denunciations of moderate men. Narrow minded philanthropists will not see that to a large proportion of men and women, fermented liquors are a necessary article of food: that to others they bring a daily soothing influence, without injurious reaction.

The outlay on fermented liquors is not in itself a waste, though it is needlessly large: it is like the outlay on solid food, of which also men often take too much to the great injury of their health and happiness; piling over their bones mountains of fat, which destroys their activity and ruins their vital organs.

The evils which attend excesses in drinking are indeed great, but are exaggerated by temperance advocates, who would have us believe that if we could only banish fermented liquors from the earth, the reign of Saturn would return. I have shown that in Luther's days the Germans drank to brutishness but were comparatively virtuous: the Romans were

sober, but disgraced by every conceivable vice. I have pointed out that while the northern European nations are comparatively drunken but mild and industrious, the Spaniards are sober but ferocious, the Neapolitans are sober but idle and squalid, the Romans are sober but are idle and inveterately addicted to gambling. At present even in England, drink often leads to quarrels and personal violence: as regards other crimes men use drink as the means of screwing themselves up to commit them.

It must be conceded that there is much injurious drinking and a good deal of drunkenness, in England, Scotland, and Ireland. But there is much diversity between different parts of the three kingdoms. Liverpool with its unskilled, shifting, loafing population, corrupted by the bad example of the coarse enjoyments of sailors ashore, is far worse than the manufacturing towns; and among these there are great differences.

On the whole, there is abundant room for the advocates of temperance. It is to be regretted however, that much exaggeration is practised on platforms and in periodicals. Not only are we told that most vice and crime are traceable to drinking, but we are assured that Great Britain is preëminent in excess.

I have run over many European countries: I have proved that spirit drinking prevails in Scandinavia, in Russia, in Germany, in Switzerland. As to France, generally assumed to be the model of sobriety, I have given my reasons for believing that except in the south, this reputation for moderation is unfounded. Popular literature accords with the direct

evidence of observers, in proving that the detestable habit of taking absinthe is widespread. Thirty years ago, brandy drinking at the cafés, wine and spirit drinking among artisans, were common just as they are now. In the manufacturing towns, except the southern Lyons, the habits are of the grossest kind : in half-manufacturing villages matters are not much better : in other villages members of the communal council celebrate their meetings with potations pottle deep; and even farmers and farm labourers are sometimes wanting in moderation.

All these facts prove conclusively that Great Britain has no monopoly of excessive drinking.

A further survey teaches the same lesson. The Americans, who boast that they have shaken off the feudalism of Europe, have not at the same time got rid of the tyranny of alcohol. They do not indeed, after the bodily or mental fatigues of the day, sit down with their friends and enjoy to excess the port and madeira of the old world : their drinking takes another form. But the inveteracy of the desire is shown by the pertinacious attempts at remedies during a whole generation : permissive laws and partial prohibitions and Maine laws, having been enacted, repealed, and re-enacted in one and another State of the Union.

There are countries however, in which the vice is uncommon : as Spain, Italy, the south of France. This cannot be the result merely of a higher temperature, since many hot countries indulge to excess : Bengal, other parts of India, Persia, West Africa, are examples. It is probably the result partly of a moderately warm and fine climate, which makes

mere existence a pleasure. Such a condition of life is unknown to the northern nations, who can enjoy themselves only in strenuous work, exciting pleasures, and hard earned repose, and who do not understand the *dolce far niente* : such a condition is equally unknown to the inhabitants of the torrid zone, where vigorous labour is repugnant to man, and constant thirst torments him.

Looking at this matter from an English point of view, it is consolatory to find that we are not worse than other northern nations : looking at it from a cosmopolitan point of view it is distressing to reflect how incurable must be a vice which has prevailed in all periods, in nearly all countries, among most classes. Preaching of moderation, total prohibition, private effort, legal interference, have all failed.

Yet we need not despair. Progress has been made. Even in the last century, and during the early part of the present, the middle and higher classes drank to excess : Lord Chatham, and still more his great son ; Lord Eldon and Lord Stowell ; if they did not all of them get intoxicated, at least drank port enough to insure the gout. But among the educated classes now, there is comparatively little excess. Why should we refuse to believe that the lower classes may attain to equal moderation ? As innocent and healthful pleasures grow, the vile and debasing ones are choked and disappear.

## VI.

**T**HERE is another vice, that of unchastity, the prevalence of which in one place and another we



may attempt to estimate. As to drunkenness I have acknowledged that any statistical comparison is impossible; but in the matter of unchastity we have at any rate the returns of births, distinguishing the illegitimate from those born in wedlock. No doubt, there is much vice, and in cities especially, which does not result in births; and for this reason it is impossible to compare towns with rural districts by means of the registers. But this we may do: we may compare one town with another, and one country parish with another. We may advantageously set side by side the rates of illegitimacy in Cumberland, Lincolnshire, and Devonshire: in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, York, and Norwich; in London, Paris, Vienna, and Stockholm.

The amount of illegitimacy has an interest of its own, independently of the moral condition of the parents indicated by it. It is an intolerable misfortune to a nation to have crowds of children base-born: some to be slowly murdered by baby-farmers; more killed off by the want of that milk and that attention which their mothers sell to the rich; brought up, if they live, outside family life and natural affection; neglected, buffeted, driven to pauperism and crime.

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We shall find that England greatly suffers in this way:<sup>(81)</sup> that exclusive of Scotland and Ireland, we have probably 1,000 illegitimates born every week. Ireland, it is believed, is more fortunate, though the imperfection of its registration leaves us a good deal to conjecture. The case of Scotland is singular.

Ever since the great Reformation, education has been carefully fostered there, and the people are eminently a God-fearing race: yet as I have shown, drinking has not been put down; and as to the present inquiry we find that allowing for difference of population, our 1,000 illegitimates a week rise to nearly 1,500 in Scotland.

A formal inquiry recently made, establishes the accuracy of this serious charge.<sup>(82)</sup> Incidentally, it also confirms the favourable estimate I have given as to the Irish. The Bailie of a village close to Stirling, says:—

“There is a colony of Irish here and has been for about twenty years. They live in very poor houses and have very little furniture; but they pay small rents, and some of them pay no rent. When they first came here they used to make great rows amongst themselves, and were very troublesome. A good many were taken up by the police and fined, and that quieted them: they do not like losing their money, so if they make a row I just threaten them with the police and they are quiet directly. About the beginning of May they go with their families to the bark-peeling, and lock up their houses, nailing a board across the door. They stay out about two months and sleep in wooden sheds, lying together as thick as bees, but there is no immorality among them; indeed, they just behave to each other like when children, you would think they hadn't the same notions as other folk. I have only known two, or at most three Irish girls go wrong, and it was always with Scotchmen. They are a saving race, and can live where a Scotchman would starve. When

they go to the bark-peeling they frequently leave their savings-bank books with me, and a good many have them. I have one book with £40 to the good on it now in my house."

This passage occurs in a report by the Commissioners on agriculture in Scotland. It is a singular contrast with the evidence as to Scottish morals.

In the matter of education, we are told, there is little to be desired in agricultural Scotland. The parents have that earnestness about it which secures its efficiency: they do not, like English parents, permit unnecessary absences, and withdraw their children on trifling excuses: they will not even allow field-labour to be a serious hindrance.

The schools are numerous, and are superior to our small grammar schools: the fees are low. Latin, Greek, and French are learnt, as well as some mathematics, and occasionally German. The young people are better taught than their parents; but "I never neighboured a family," says a shepherd, "where the men and women could not read and write."

We have to do here with the lowlands and the north-east. The Gaelic population is more ignorant. It is strange however, that it is free from that immorality which I have to describe.

The evidence as to this immorality seems indisputable, though it is so amazing that it is hard to believe it. We are told that female chastity is scarcely valued by either sex, and that a woman who has had a natural child has as good a chance of marriage as another. Such an event is a misfortune

rather than a disgrace. Nay, there are men who prefer the soiled dove.

Knowing how rashly certain men generalize from single instances, we may suspect the opinions of some exaggeration. But the facts stated certainly support them. "The amount of illegitimacy has greatly increased." "Our poorhouses are inundated with illegitimate children. The father can seldom be made liable, and unhappily, the unmarried women of the lower class do not seem to lose caste by their misadventures." The disclosures in filiation cases in Berwickshire "exhibit a condition of unbridled licence as to a large extent the rule of life among the labouring classes." A solicitor says:—"From the nature of my profession, it is a matter of common occurrence with me to meet with cases of immorality so gross as would not be readily believed by the public. . . . It may be confidently affirmed, however startling the assertion, that only a very small percentage of females among those employed in agricultural pursuits remain personally chaste." A man will "come to your house very early in the morning to visit a sweetheart among the servants, and get a ladder to get up to her window, or break in through a lower window, and if you interfere you will get your windows broken or your cow stabbed, and will never find out who did it, for they will never tell of one another."

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What are the causes of this frightful laxity? Some persons attribute a good deal of it to the annual hiring-markets, which are attended by men



and women servants. But we English have our "mops" and "statutes," our wakes and fairs; and though our agricultural illegitimacy is considerable, it is not to be compared with that of the lowland Scotch. By some, the bothy system is made answerable for the mischief. Bothies are a rough sort of labourers' lodging-houses, set up near the farm-houses for unmarried men-servants, half a dozen or a dozen of whom have one eating-room and two or three bed-rooms. Sometimes, women are lodged in the same way. This system however, cannot account for much: for we find that a good many Highland women so housed are thoroughly well conducted. The Irish too, go out for months together, and live in the same way, without any bad consequences. I agree with a writer who says that "it is neither the bothies, nor the bondagers, the box-beds nor the small cottages, that are to blame. If the Irish sleep together like saints or children, and the Highland women make their bothies the abodes of cleanliness, order and respectability, it is clear that it is not on the size of the building, but on the character of the people who tenant them that the question hinges."

The real fault is in the sentiments of the people. When the sense of shame is undeveloped, and instinctive modesty is dulled, there will be endless immorality. A landed proprietor says:—"It does not appear to me that the manner of lodging people has much to do with the immorality complained of; it is *just as bad*, in the *cottages* of the farm servant, and no Act of Parliament will prevent young men and women from meeting and doing what *they think*

*right*, or at least *not wrong*." Another witness, speaking of Dr. Strachan, says that "he lays a good deal of blame upon the women, and I think he is right. There seems to be no notion among the young women in this county that there is anything improper in receiving men in their bed-rooms at midnight. Dr. Johnson said, 'Where there is shame, there may in time be virtue,' but with our rural population there is not even *shame*."

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But now comes the further question, how this low moral tone has arisen. Clearly not from want of education or of religious culture. The English labourers are less educated and less religious, while they are more moral. The Highlanders and the Irish may be equally religious after their fashion, with the Scotch Lowlanders, but they are far more ignorant.

Comparing Scotland with England, there are two remarkable legal differences, both of which may have had an influence, working as they have done for centuries.

One difference is even of ancient date. In Scotland, a child born before marriage becomes legitimate by the subsequent intermarriage of the parents; and this is the rule generally where the Civil Law has prevailed; that is in most European countries. But in England,<sup>(83)</sup> for more than six hundred years, the law has been different: at the famous Parliament of Merton in the year 1235, the prelates "endeavoured to procure an Act to declare all bastards legitimate in case the parents intermarried at any time afterwards. . . . but 'all the earls and barons (says

the parliament-roll) with one voice answered, that they would not change the laws of England, which had hitherto been used and approved.'” In Scotland then, the child born before marriage, ranks with his brothers and sisters born after marriage, and inherits property just as they do: in England the stain of illegitimacy adheres through life. There are few men powerful enough to do what Sir Robert Walpole did, when after his wife's death, he got an Act of Parliament to render legitimate the child born to him by Miss Skerrett during his wife's lifetime. This indelible stain on the child is in England no doubt, a considerable safeguard against unchastity.

Our moderately strict marriage-law is another safeguard. Until the new Marriage-Act towards the close of George II's reign, there was considerable informality even in England: but it was nothing like what has prevailed in Scotland till the present day. In England the intervention of a clergyman was understood to be required: though any hedge-priest, or priest imprisoned in the Fleet, could perform the ceremony. The readers of Horace Walpole's letters, must remember the case of a young man, (Handsome Tracey I believe) who was smitten in the park with a pretty face, pursued the girl to the house of her mother, who was perhaps a washer-woman, got a priest, and married her on the spot. A few years later he would have had to wait for some days or weeks. But in Scotland it was then, as it is now, sufficient to declare before witnesses that a man and woman agree to be man and wife. Miss Edgeworth's father, we are told, visiting Scot-

land in his youth, jestingly went through some ceremony with a young lady, and was long hampered by a claim founded on it.

This facility of huddling up a marriage at any time, and declaring it to have taken place long before, together with the legitimization of all the children whenever born, must greatly encourage illicit connexions. And this view is strengthened by the fact that among these women so lax before marriage, adultery is almost unknown; and by another fact, that an intrigue by a girl with a gentleman is reckoned disgraceful. A man of the girl's own rank can at any time put all straight by declaring a previous contract: a gentleman will not do this; an adulterer cannot. It is the ease of reparation that tempts to sin with a lover who promises to become a husband.

The corrupting influence of easy reparation, has been proved in another way. I have heard a high-minded man declare that he would compel every bachelor to marry a girl whom he had seduced. He would carry into practice the Jewish law: "the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and *she shall be his wife.*"<sup>(84)</sup> The Athenians, it seems, had a similar law: "*qui virginem vitiarit ducito.*" Indeed, this law seems to have been once general among nations.

According to Filangieri however,<sup>(85)</sup> it was mischievous. "Long experience has taught us that the law which compelled a man to marry a girl he had seduced, or to give her a dowry, only multiplied disorders, favoured the offence, and put innocence in danger. A young woman who felt the profit she



might draw from her favours, looked out for the opportunity of granting, or sometimes tendering them. The parents tacitly concurred in an offence on which their daughter's fortune depended, and their vigilance opportunely slumbered."

Facility of reparation then, and legitimation of premature children, have probably been two causes of Scottish immorality.

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There is another peculiar practice in Scotland which may perhaps partly account for the absence of female modesty: I mean the practice of having boys and girls taught together in schools. A writer indeed, whom I have quoted, adopts the opinions of the Commission. He says that this teaching of the two sexes in common, is no experiment, but has long been practised; and with excellent results. The proof of the excellence appears defective, because it is limited to the intellectual side of the question. "The boys sometimes attempt to assume a superiority over the girls, but as far as acquirements are concerned have no right to. The best boy I have is a coalmaster's son, but there is a girl, a labourer's daughter, who can beat him in all his work, even at mathematics." In another place the doctor's daughter was at the head of the school.

Grant even, that the girls are better instructed than they would be in separate schools. Would not such an advantage be dearly bought at the price of virgin modesty? Let anyone remember his own schooldays, and say whether his companions' language and tone of thought fitted them to mix

familiarly every day with young girls. It is easy to say that ignorance and innocence are not the same thing; and that girls who know the most of sexual dangers may be as innocent as other girls. From that opinion I strongly dissent: I hold that the knowledge of such evil, is a weakening of the instinctive modesty which is the first and strongest safeguard of innocence.

I hear that in our Reformatory Schools, boys and girls have been frequently taught in common; but that the practice has been abandoned in nearly every case. In the United States the two sexes are often taught together: many Americans say that this commixture works well: others denounce it as abominable.

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If I were a Scotchman, I would willingly try to separate the sexes in schools, in hope of diminishing this plague of immorality. Whether I would try to do away with the law that legitimates by marriage the children previously born, I cannot say without further inquiry. I certainly would join in an effort to make marriage a more formal matter, after due notice, as in England.

I am quite aware that hindrances to marriage are not free from danger, and require to be used with moderation. Compel young persons to take a short time for reflection, and to give a few weeks' notice of their intention to marry. I am not certain whether requiring a fee for the ceremony is wise. You may say that if young people cannot find the few shillings demanded, they must be too poor to

marry. But there are many cases where a couple are living together unmarried, and are really deterred from the ceremony by inability to spare the fees: clergymen often, in bad quarters of towns, marry such couples gratuitously. Perhaps it would be wiser to retain the requirement of notice, and to waive all fees.

Where more serious obstacles are interposed, the most unfortunate consequences follow. In certain parts of Germany, no marriage is allowed, until the young couple have satisfied the police that they will have the means of maintaining a family. The result is that an irregular alliance is contracted, frequently with the consent of the girl's father, who allows the young man to come to his house as his son-in-law. The children born are illegitimate. But when the young man gets established and obtains the police authorization, marriage takes place and the children become legitimate. If the young man is unprincipled, he deserts his left-handed wife and marries another woman. Such formidable obstacles to marriage as these, are indefensible.

#### VII.

THUS far we see that in England we have a very serious number of illegitimate children born; no less than 1,000 a week: that in Ireland the evil is probably less: that in Scotland it is certainly far greater, population considered. Now let us look at other European countries.

For the sake of clear comparison, let us imagine that every nation I mention had the same population

of about  $22\frac{1}{2}$  millions. The number of illegitimates that are born every week in England . . . 1,000  
 that would be born in Scotland . . . 1,500  
 „ „ in Holland . . . 820  
 „ „ in France . . . 1,250  
 „ „ in Belgium . . . 1,300  
 „ „ in Sweden . . . 1,450  
 „ „ in Norway . . . 1,450  
 „ „ in Prussia . . . 1,500  
 „ „ in Austria . . . 1,800  
 „ „ in Denmark . . . 1,900  
 „ „ in Saxony . . . 2,700  
 „ „ in Germany . . . 3,000  
 „ „ in Bavaria . . . 4,000

The higher numbers, found at the bottom of the list, are no doubt, partly attributable to excessive restraints imposed on marriage.<sup>(86)</sup>

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The returns from different European capitals are striking and painful. I will take the same mode of comparison as that above: assuming all the capitals to have an equal population with that of London. The number of illegitimates registered weekly in London<sup>(87)</sup> is about . . . 100  
 that would be registered in Paris . . . 600  
 „ „ in Stockholm . . . 900  
 „ „ in Prague . . . 1,100  
 „ „ in Vienna . . . 1,200

In our own great towns the same mode of comparison gives Liverpool . . . 65  
 „ Birmingham . . . 105  
 „ Manchester . . . 150  
 „ Leeds . . . 150



It is difficult to believe these returns; and yet the longer I have considered them the less is my incredulity. But those who dispute them and find themselves unable to justify their disbelief, then resort to the notion that it is the prevalence of town vices and of unwholesome conditions that renders women unfruitful. The conclusive reply is, that by a comparison of the number of births and of the number of married women from 20 to 45 years old, we find that marriages are rather more fruitful in towns than in the rural districts; and if marriages why not illicit connexions? (I except of course the case of prostitutes.)

Are we then really to believe that London has proportionally fewer illegitimate births than a country parish? or than a manufacturing town? I will not go so far as to say that. I know that in London there are many men of the middle and upper ranks, who are unable to marry, and who having formed left-handed connections, register their children as legitimate. This class however, though considerable absolutely, forms only a small part of the population. The middle and upper ranks throughout the kingdom, are about a seventh of the whole people: in London they are far more; assume that they are even a fourth. If all the children of this fourth were illegitimate, the baseborn of London would exceed a fourth of all born. But we all know that our friends in London, live for the most part the same respectable married life that prevails elsewhere: it is only one here and there that hides the household in a corner. The clergy, the medical men, are much the same as their brethren in other towns: the merchants, the retail

dealers, the licensed victuallers, have no reason for departing from the ordinary English standard. Young lawyers and idle men living on small means, are the principal offenders. Possibly, if the register of births were accurately kept, London might be found to have twice as many illegitimate births as are now set down: that is, 200 a week against the proportionate 600 of Paris and 1200 of Vienna.

In support of these opinions about London, I will mention two facts. The first regards the number of marriages. It is generally found that where illegitimacy is frequent, marriages are few: the Scottish Registrar General notices this, and the same thing is stated as to certain parts of the north of England. Now the London marriage rate is not low: on the contrary, it is far higher than that of England generally.

The other fact regards the number of applications by mothers to affiliate their children at petty sessions.<sup>(88)</sup> The number of such applications in the county of Middlesex is small. I grant that the left-handed connections I have mentioned, would not often cause such applications, and that the children resulting from them must be added. But the paucity of affiliations seems to prove that among the ordinary London population, illegitimacy is not frequent.

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The figures I have given above for the great towns, will not be readily accepted as true. It seems incredible that Liverpool should have a low rate, together with its notorious drunkenness and ram-

pant crime. Yet this combination is correlative with that of the Lowland Scotch, among whom we find good education, a religious spirit, and much illegitimacy. We must remember also, that Liverpool has a great number of Irish labourers; so great that half the prisoners in the Liverpool gaols are Roman Catholics: and we have already seen that the Irish labourers, though drunken and quarrelsome, are singularly chaste.

Birmingham has a low rate. If you would trust the thoughtless opinions of certain clergymen, the illegitimacy is really high: but put your clerical informants through a mild cross-questioning, and you will silence them. A university man, brought up perhaps in the country, is repelled by the grimy look and independent spirit of the Birmingham mechanic; who will take off his hat to no man that will not return his salute; who will give civility for civility, but will call no man master; whose motto should be, "civility not servility." Then again the mechanic regards Sunday as a day of bodily rest, and recks little of church services and tedious sermons: not that he is hostile to religion, but that he is indifferent to it. All this is repugnant to the clergy.

The low rate of illegitimacy in Birmingham ought to be accepted the more readily, because as I have shown, the amount of drunkenness is comparatively small, and the death-rate is remarkably moderate. Part of these favourable conditions may be attributed to well known circumstances: most of the work is performed by trained men and not by wonderful machines: unskilled and ill-paid labourers are

therefore rare. The best of these skilled men, almost belong to the middle classes of society, and they are generally far superior to untaught country louts.

Manchester and Leeds have a higher rate of illegitimacy; as might be expected from the greater prevalence of machinery, and of unskilled watchers and tenders.

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One of the most striking singularities of this subject is the relation of town and country in England, as compared with the same relation on the Continent. Here, the higher rate of illegitimacy is found in the rural districts: there the higher rate is found in the towns. An official report in Prussia, says as follows.<sup>(89)</sup>

“In towns, where many young unmarried persons of both sexes reside, the proportions are always more unfavourable than in the country, where at least oftener than in towns, the fault of illicit intercourse is repaired as far as may be by subsequent marriage.” The report adds that the illegitimate births are in towns . . . 11 per cent. of all births; in rural districts, only . . .  $7\frac{1}{2}$  „ „

Now in England, some of the towns, and those of the largest size, have a low rate. For example;<sup>(90)</sup> we have in Norfolk . . . 10 per cent. of all births

„	Shropshire	. . .	$9\frac{1}{2}$	„	„
„	North Riding	. . .	9	„	„
„	Bedfordshire	. . .	8	„	„
But in	Liverpool	. . .	$4\frac{1}{2}$	„	„
„	Birmingham	. . .	5	„	„
„	Wolverhampton	. . .	6	„	„
„	Blackburn	. . .	6	„	„



Other towns, no doubt, have a higher rate. But it will hardly be credited that the large cities I have quoted have the low rate stated in the registers.

I have already confessed that there are a certain number of left-handed connections, the families of which are registered as legitimate. In the great manufacturing towns however, men are not driven into such irregular courses, as they are in London; where young barristers and men of no calling, find it impossible to maintain an avowed household: nor is it easy, as it is in London, to live concealed. In trading society, men while still young, earn considerable incomes, and commonly marry at twenty-five to thirty years old.

Against such irregular registrations also must be put the considerable number of immigrant women who come to towns to hide their shame.

Then it is naturally supposed that young women will try to register their base-born infants as legitimate, or will not register them at all: but I am told by conscientious registrars that the contrary is the case; that illegitimate children are more regularly registered than other children; and for the obvious advantage of supplying evidence against the putative father.

If it is still believed that the registration of the rural districts is better than that of the towns, and so much better as to more than counterbalance the irregular births of immigrants into the towns, I then ask whether the same is not true of other countries. I am not discussing the comparative vice of English town and English country, but the relation of town and country in England as compared with the same

relation in other countries. It does appear that while in England illegitimacy is more prevalent in the country, on the Continent it is more prevalent in towns.

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## VIII.

**M**Y conclusions in this Second Part are not unfavourable to the sexual morality of this country.

Ireland, we have reason to believe, is remarkable for the virtue of its women. We cannot say as much for Scotland, where the labouring classes, except in the Highlands, are singularly wanting in this respect. I may be right in supposing that this is partly attributable to the continuance of the old law which, on the marriage of parents, renders legitimate all children born before the marriage; partly attributable to the looseness and informality permitted in contracting marriages; partly attributable to the practice of educating boys and girls together.

I have shown that, judged by registers, London, as compared with other capitals, stands high in morality; and this, even if we suppose that the children springing from left-handed connections and registered as legitimate, are enough to double the known 100 a week. I have appealed to the statistics of affiliation cases before the magistrates, to strengthen the opinion that the ordinary population of London, the workmen and lower middle classes, are as moral as they are elsewhere in England.

The very great towns of England too, many of them show less illegitimacy than the bad agricultural

districts, such as Norfolk, Shropshire, and the North Riding.

There is also the singularity, that in most countries the towns have the greatest number of illegitimate births; while in England the rural districts have that unenviable distinction.

*I believe we may say that, as to drinking, we are not worse than other European nations, except those of Southern Europe; and that in sexual morality we stand above them.*

## NOTES TO ESSAY III.

- (1) Quarterly Review, 73, 49.
- (2) *Ib.*, 73, 54 and 60.
- (3) *Ib.*, 74, 485.
- (4) Irving, *Annals*, ed. 1869, 23.
- (4A) Nicholls, *English Poor Law* 1, 115.
- (4B) Quarterly Rev., 64, 436.
- (5) *Revue des deux Mondes*, 80, 47, note.
- (6) Quart. Rev., 75, 96.
- (7) Itudus T. Prichard, *Administration of India*.
- (8) Pall Mall Gaz., 24 Sept., 1866.
- (9) *Revue des deux Mondes*, 66, 784.
- (10) Neison, *Contributions to Vital Statistics*, edn. 1857, 225.
- (11) Pall Mall Gaz., 11 Feb., 1870.
- (12) *Social Science Transactions*, 1867, 563.
- (13) Taine, *Littérature Anglaise*, 1866, 2, 283.
- (13A) Quart. Rev., 150, 488.
- (14) Disraeli, *Curiosities of Literature*, edn. 1849, 2, 322.
- (15) Pall Mall Gaz., 1 April, 1871.
- (15A) *Ib.*, 15 April, 1871.
- (15B) *Ib.*, 21 April, 1871.
- (16) *Ib.*, 30 January, 1867.
- (17) A. Young, *Annals of Agriculture*, 20, 443.
- (18) *Statistical Journal*, 13, 358.
- (19) Clay, *Prison Chaplain*, 511.
- (20) *Knight's Companion to Almanack*, 1870, 31.
- (21) Dr. Franklin's *Memoirs*, ed. 1818, 68, 69.
- (22) Quart. Rev., 72, 521.
- (23) *Second Philippic*.
- (24) Le Play, *Ouvriers Européens*, 200, 1.
- (25) *Journeyman Engineer, Habits of Working Classes*, 133.
- (26) *Social Science, Sessional Proceedings*, 2 Nov., 1866, 13.
- (27) Pall Mall Gaz., 4 Jan., 1871.
- (28) Irving, *Annals*, 221.
- (28A) Peto, *Resources of America*, 1866, 154-5.
- (28B) Stat. Journal, 30, 396.
- (28C) Pall Mall Gaz., 16 Sept., 1867.
- (28D) *Ib.*, 4 May, 1871.
- (29) Laing's *Norway*, edn. 1851, 189.
- (30) Le Play, *Ouv. Europ.*, 99, 1.
- (31) *Ib.*, 98, 1.
- (32) Peto, *Resources of America*, 1866, 154.
- (33) Le Play, *Ouv. Europ.*, 92, 1.
- (33A) Pall Mall Gaz., 13 April, 1871, 8.
- (34) Malthus, edn. 1826, 1, 305, 306.
- (35) *Englishwoman in Russia*, 86 and 221.
- (36) *Statistical Journal*, 27, 373.
- (37) *Ib.*, 377.
- (38) *Ib.*, 373.
- (39) Pall Mall Gaz., 1 April, 1869.
- (40) Le Play, *Ouv. Europ.*, 152, 153.
- (41) Price, *Annuities*, 2, 234.
- (42) Moynier, *Instit. Ouv. de la Suisse*, 1867, 36.
- (43) *Ib.*, 96.
- (44) *Ib.*, 120.
- (45) Adam Smith, edn. 1839, 218, 1.
- (46) Rev. d. d. Mondes, 75, 12.
- (47) *Ib.*, 76, 739.
- (48) Pall Mall Gaz., 2 May, 1868.
- (49) *Ib.*, 13 May, 1868.
- (50) *Ib.*, 2 May, 1868.
- (51) *Ib.*, 6 June, 1867.
- (52) Rev. d. d. Mondes, 69, 331 to 333.
- (53) *Social Science Review*, 5, 411.
- (54) Rev. d. d. Mondes, 87, 911.
- (55) Quart. Rev., 70, 7.
- (56) Louis Reybaud, *Le Coton*, 1863, 233.
- (57) Duc de Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*.
- (58) *Journal des Economistes*, Feb., 1867, 226.
- (59) Louis Reybaud, *La Laine*, 1867, 213.
- (60) *Ib.*, 350 and 81.
- (61) *Ib.*, 158, 343, 71, 323.
- (62) E. Véron, *Inst. Ouv. de Mulhouse*, 1866, 133.
- (63) Louis Reybaud, *La Laine*, 1867, 65.
- (64) Le Play, *Ouvriers Européens*, 225, 2.
- (65) Rev. d. d. Mondes, 77, 233.
- (66) Pall Mall Gaz., 21 Oct., 1869.
- (66A) *Ib.*, 27 May, 1871, and Rev. d. d. Mondes, 94, 273.
- (66B) Pall Mall Gaz., 3 May, 1871.
- (67) Quarterly Rev., 64, 323.
- (68) Pall Mall Gaz., 14 May, 1869.
- (69) Peto, 1866, 153 and note.
- (70) *Ib.*, 155.
- (71) Pall Mall Gaz., 8 Jan., 1868.
- (72) *Ib.*, 12 May, 1868.
- (73) Le Play, *Ouv. Europ.*, 181, 1, and 183, 2.
- (74) Hunter's *Rural Bengal*, 1868, 275.
- (75) *Ib.*, 277.
- (76) Prichard's *India*, 1869, 1, 202.
- (77) Chunder Sen, *Speech in St. James's Hall*, 19 May, 1870.
- (78) Humboldt, *La Nouvelle Espagne*, Paris, 1811, 1, 391.
- (79) Herodotus, 1, 134.
- (80) Morier's *Hajji Baba in England*.
- (81) Registrar General 31, x.
- (82) Pall Mall Gaz., 1871, March 8 and 23, April 3, 8, and 11.
- (83) Stephen's *Blackstone*, 1858, 1, 13.
- (84) *Deuteronomy*, 22, 29.
- (85) Filangieri, *French Edition*, 1840, 2, 157.
- (86) *Journal des Economistes*, May, 1868, 181. *Statistical Journal*, vol. 25, 164 and 219: vol. 28, 421.
- (87) Registrar General, 31, 50.
- (88) *Annals British Legislation*, 52, <sup>102</sup><sub>166</sub>
- (89) *Statistical Journal*, 23, 207.
- (90) *Ib.*, 25, 219.





## Essay IV.

### THE PURSE AND THE CASHBOX.

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#### I.

**Y**OU are a manufacturer, carrying in your purse ten sovereigns for household purposes, and having in your cashbox at your factory a hundred sovereigns for the purchase of iron and for paying wages. What do the political economists call the ten sovereigns and the hundred sovereigns?

Some political economists call the ten and the hundred by the same name: Capital. The ten like the hundred are results of labour and of saving; the ten like the hundred are to be used in the purchase of commodities and in the paying of wages.

Others deny to the ten the name of Capital: they say that though the ten have the same origin as the hundred, and though they are used like the hundred in paying for commodities and services, yet there is a peculiarity in the ten which forbids us to call them Capital.

Suppose that in a fit of extravagance, you alter the proportions of your purse and your cashbox: that you weekly put fifty into your purse and only sixty into your cashbox: that you repeat this appropriation for a year. In previous years you had spent on your household £520: in this extravagant year you have spent £2,600. In previous years you had a considerable capital invested in your business: after this extravagant year that capital is less by about £2,000 than it would have been if you had continued to limit your household expenditure to £520.

Your business-capital is less by £2,000. If your new yearly expenditure of £2,000 has been incurred in keeping servants and horses, in travelling, in gambling, then the money is irrecoverably gone; you have had your pleasures from it and that is all. Here then, is a great difference between the purse and the cashbox: the contents of the purse perish in the using; the contents of the cashbox are reproduced.

Let us go back to my original supposition: that you put £10 into your purse and £100 into your cashbox. We see that the ten sovereigns and the hundred are equally produced by labour and accumulated by saving, and are all used in buying commodities and services: we see on the other hand, that the modes in which they are applied are essentially different.

The political economists to whom I have alluded, class together the ten sovereigns and the hundred, because they have a common *origin*, and partly a common use: I think it better to put the ten and the hundred into different classes, because they have a different ultimate *destination*.

At the same time I grant that it is desirable to have some name common to both the ten and the hundred, some name to mark their origin in common. I only say that capital is not the right name to use for both, and that it is better to confine the name Capital to the hundred sovereigns used in business. I say it is better not to apply the name capital to the ten sovereigns used in supporting my household : and I object to calling these ten sovereigns capital because such a use of the word is not conformable to our common modes of speech. If a rich man saves part of his income and invests it, we say he capitalizes it ; that is, he turns it from income into capital : if another man spends the whole of his income, he capitalizes none of it. Capital in short, in common life, is money or money's worth employed in earning an income, and especially in earning an income by carrying on a business.

We want a general name then, for the ten and the hundred sovereigns. Avoiding the name Capital, what other word can we use ?

Adam Smith and others use the word Stock as the general name. A farmer's cows are stock, a manufacturer's materials are stock : we may also call my household furniture and the ten sovereigns in my purse, stock.

All these things are produced by labour and accumulated by saving. But there are other things also produced by labour and accumulated by saving, to which the name Stock is not so applicable. Farm buildings, a factory, a canal or railroad, would not come into the category of stock in ordinary writing ; for stock is applied in ordinary writing to moveables



only. I have elsewhere suggested Effects as a better word. I know that even the word Effects is more commonly applied to moveables. But I think that in ordinary life it is not so distinctly confined to moveables as the word Stock is; besides that the word Effects may be rendered clearer to the mind in any perplexity, by translating it into Effects (of labour), while the word Stock is arbitrary and admits of no such translation.

All accumulated results of labour then I call Stock or Effects; meaning by both of these words, Effects of labour. Services which perish in the rendering, I do not call Stock or Effects.

But Stock or Effects we have already divided into two classes, represented by the hundred sovereigns and the ten sovereigns. The hundred sovereigns are unquestionably capital. What name shall we give to the ten?

Fifteen years ago, in my *Science of Social Opulence*, I formally proposed to call the ten sovereigns Self-maintenance: several years ago I again proposed the name of Self-maintenance: I am not aware that outside a small circle of intimate friends I have made a single convert to the use of the name or to the importance of giving a name at all: I am none the less convinced of the importance of giving a name, and until some better name is proposed I shall continue to call the ten sovereigns, Self-maintenance.

If I am asked what Self-maintenance is, I revert to the ten sovereigns in my purse. I spend part of these on the necessities of life, as bread and meat, warm clothes and shelter; I spend part on super-

fluties, as wine and broad-cloth, or travelling for pleasure; I spend part on luxuries, as *château Lafite* and on an expensive hotel bill: but I call all these Self-maintenance.

Again; I share with a wife and children the necessities, the superfluities, and the luxuries which I buy: I call Self-maintenance these commodities consumed by my family. I give a half-sovereign to a destitute person, or a guinea to a charity: I call these Self-maintenance, as being a part of my domestic expenditure.

## II.

WE have got thus far then: that the results of labour and saving may be called Stock or Effects (of labour); the part of my Effects which I carry in my purse, Self-maintenance; the part which I keep in my cashbox, Capital.

But is there any value in this division of Stock or Effects, into Self-maintenance and Capital?

Let us test it by an application to one of the commonest doctrines of political economists.

We are told that the employment of labour is dependent upon the existence of capital: that as this increases so the demand for labour increases. The economists when pressed, have to concede that an increase of steam-engines may supersede labour, and that the breaking of thrashing-machines and of lace-making machines, formerly showed that in fact labourers were displaced by machinery. The doctrine therefore, must be limited to the proposition that labour is dependent upon circulating capital, and

that the demand for labour is increased as circulating capital is increased. For the sake of argument let this proposition be conceded, without any protest as to the necessity for a field for employment.

Now take the case of a man with a large income derived from land or consols or foreign funds. He keeps ten women servants and five men. His income is suddenly increased: he now doubles the number of his servants. The demand for this kind of labour augments as the income augments. The gentleman uses his income as self-maintenance, and as the amount of self-maintenance grows the demand for domestic servants grows.

You may object that the demand caused by capital is permanent, because the capital reproduces itself. But if this man's income consists of rent of land, both the land and the rent are more permanent than capital and the profits derived from it: if it consists in the interest on money with good security, it is nearly as secure of permanency as rent itself, and quite as secure as the profits of capital.

Self-maintenance then when arising from a permanent source, causes a direct demand for labour just as capital does. Nor must this be regarded as a trifling exception to the supposed law that labour is dependent on capital. It is a wonderful fact that in England and Wales the domestic servants, male and female, are far more numerous than the farm labourers. True, the farm labourers have commonly families dependent on them; so that the number of persons maintained by farm labour is far greater than the number maintained by domestic service. But the effective demand for labour de-

pend on the money applied to paying for it. Now we may reckon the income of a farm labourer at £30 a year (after deducting the loss by unemployed time). The cost of maintaining a domestic woman servant is set down by Mr. Porter at £35 a year: but if we remember the large proportion of young girls who are set down as servants, we may perhaps prefer £25 a year as the estimated average cost. We may double this for the male servants. We shall then find that the self-maintenance employed in supporting domestic servants, is considerably greater than the farm capital employed in supporting labourers.

Labour therefore, is not directly dependent on capital alone: it is to a large extent directly dependent on self-maintenance.

But we may go a step further. You are a manufacturer of silks, and you employ a thousand pair of hands. For a time you sell all the goods you make. But after a bad harvest or two, your richer customers find their rents ill paid: they spend less, and buy fewer silks. You in consequence have an accumulating stock on hand, and you find it necessary to reduce the employment of your workpeople to three days a week. The demand for labour is so far diminished by one-half. Why? By a diminution of capital? Not at all. The demand for labour is diminished because the demand for its productions is diminished: and the demand for the productions is diminished because the self-maintenance is diminished. A manufacturer's capital directly employs labour: but it is self-maintenance which periodically replaces the capital and enables it to continue the



employment of labour. It is self-maintenance therefore, so far as my case extends, which directly or indirectly sets labour to work and employs it. Here again, is an important distinction between Capital and Self-Maintenance.

I am quite aware that I shall be met here with the dogma that where there is capital there will be labour employed; and that if silks cease to be wanted the capitalist will turn to some other employment. Suppose that he turns to the manufacture of furniture: the same thing happens as happened with silks; when all the capital is invested in furniture the employment of the workmen must cease until self-maintenance has come forward to buy part of the stock of furniture. All production of commodities takes place with a view to consumption, and consumption is the use of commodities as self-maintenance. Even the manufacture of steam engines and tools, supposes the future production of commodities and their consumption as self-maintenance. It is self-maintenance therefore, which gives employment to labour: directly in the case of domestic servants; indirectly in the case of most commodities.

Other objections will be made to these statements, because they contradict the doctrines of orthodox political economy, one of which doctrines is that capital can always give employment to labour; and another, that overproduction is impossible; for that what is called overproduction is really wrong production. As I believe that many of the doctrines of political economy are false, this objection has little weight with me.

At present however, I am concerned only with the

division of Stock or Effects into Capital and Self-Maintenance : I have adduced certain questionable doctrines merely as an example of the value of my nomenclature. It seems to me that by the use of the term Self-Maintenance, it becomes far easier for me to explain what I mean when I say that labour is not ultimately dependent on Capital. I am convinced that by means of this distinction, the truth or falsehood of the accepted doctrines can be more easily established.

## III.

I DO not expect to convince certain political economists that the bread I eat is not capital. It must be understood that in my system, wheat is capital in the hands of the farmer and of the corn-dealer, who carry on business with it: flour is capital in the hands of the miller and the baker, who carry on business with it. But the bread in my pantry is Self-Maintenance; I do not carry on business with it.

It will be said that with part of this bread I feed servants, and that they give services for it: nay, that in the case of a sempstress or a gardener there are commodities produced: that in both cases, and especially in the case of sempstress and gardener, I employ the bread as Capital.

Let us take the sempstress first.

A manufacturer at Belfast produces 100 pieces of linen and sells them at a profit to a warehouseman in Birmingham: the warehouseman sells them in smaller quantities and makes his profit. So far the 100 pieces of linen are capital. One of the pieces is

sold by the warehouseman to you, and you have bought it to have it made up into shirts for yourself: accordingly, you set a sempstress to cut the linen up into smaller pieces of various forms and sizes. It is contended that you are acting here as a capitalist: that your piece of linen is capital, that the maintenance and wages given to the sempstress are capital: that the shirts when made are worth more to you than the price of the linen and the maintenance and wages of the sempstress: that you carry on the business of shirtmaking, paying wages and finding materials. The linen, maintenance, and wages then, are capital.

There is another side to the question however. The sempstress cuts your piece of linen into strips, squares, and trapeziums. These curious figures are worth more to you than the original piece: they are worth more by the maintenance and wages of the sempstress. I say they are worth more to you: but try to sell them and see if they are worth more in the market. Most of your neighbours use calico and not linen: of those who use linen one finds that your linen is too fine and another that it is too coarse; a third is taller than you, a fourth is shorter: a dealer offers you half or a fourth of what you paid.

The strips and gussets are worth more to you than the original piece was: they are worth more to you for your own use, not for sale. The value added to the piece of calico by cutting it up, is a value in use and not a value in exchange. But a capitalist makes it his sole business to add to the value in exchange.

I conclude that the piece of linen, and the maintenance and wages of the sempstress, are not capital but self-maintenance.

I think the same is true as to a cook : the joint of beef that she roasts is not so saleable as the same joint before it was roasted. The butcher would take it back before it was cooked, but not afterwards. After cooking, it is worth more to you for your use, but not for exchange. To a capitalist who keeps an eating-house, a joint is worth more money after it is cooked, but it is not so to you who have no sale for it.

Your gardener comes into the same category. No one supposes that you grow your vegetables and flowers and fruit, as cheap as you can buy them. If you tried to sell your potatoes and calceolarias and grapes, you would find that they cost you twice the price you could get for them. Yet you go on growing them, because you have a pleasure in doing so. You get a value in use, not a value in exchange.

I hold therefore, that the maintenance and wages of servants, and the materials they are employed on, are not properly capital, but self-maintenance.

For the sake of exactness I have before proposed to divide self-maintenance into two classes : the one class consisting of the very things you eat, drink, wear, and otherwise consume ; the other of the materials, maintenance of servants and wages, used in producing them. The one class I call Final Self-Maintenance, the other class Mediate Self-Maintenance.

Your 100 sovereigns in your cashbox are capital : your 10 sovereigns in your purse are self-maintenance ; and as you do not consume the sovereigns themselves but use them as a medium for obtaining food and other things which you do consume, it follows that the 10 sovereigns are Mediate Self-Maintenance.



Hitherto, I have divided all your stock into capital and self-maintenance. But assume now, that at the end of the year you find yourself with £500 which you can spare from your business, and which you will not spend, that is, which you will not use as self-maintenance. You determine to invest this £500 as a present reserve and as a future provision for your family. Possibly you may lend the £500 to your neighbour, who will use it as capital in buying materials and paying wages.

But what is this £500 to you? It is not capital nor is it self-maintenance. You call it a debt. But say that you have unquestionable security for its repayment: or say that it is lent to the Government in the form of Consols. Writers often speak loosely of the interest of the national debt and of the capital of the national debt: that may pass in ordinary conversation or ephemeral writing; but political economists should be more exact. If Government to-morrow borrowed 100 millions £. and spent it on a war, the capital which supplied the loan would be dissipated, and the Consols created would be a debt and in no sense capital. Still, you will say, it is necessary to distinguish between the sum lent and the interest: if we must not say the capital of the debt, what term shall we use? I reply that the lawyers in similar cases talk of the Corpus: if that word looks pedantic, use the good vernacular word Principal: say the principal and the interest of the debt. And when you speak of the debt owing to you by your neighbour, say that the *principal* is £500.

## v.

WE ought now to see clearly the meaning of the verbs *to spend* and *to save*. You spend the 10 sovereigns in your purse: you buy with them food and clothes and domestic services for your household. But I have shown that you employ these 10 sovereigns as self-maintenance. It seems then, that to spend money is to use it as self-maintenance; and that is exactly what I understand by the verb to spend: I understand by it to use as self-maintenance.

By saving I understand either literal hoarding, such as burying money or locking it up: or else applying it as capital: or lending it to others on security: or any other means by which the principal is secured. Any one of these proceedings constitutes saving.

It is commonly said that the capitalist spends his money just as much as the prodigal does: that he spends it in a different way. You pay your capital of 100 sovereigns to the ironmaster and the artisan: you pay your self-maintenance of 10 sovereigns to the baker and the cook. It is better I think, to say that the 100 sovereigns are *expended* or laid out, and that the 10 sovereigns are *spent*. Self-maintenance is spent, and capital is expended or laid out.

But there are different kinds of spending: there is spending on plain food and clothes and other necessities of life; there is spending on turtle and silks. Shall all these necessities, superfluities, and luxuries, be classed as self-maintenance? That is my intention: but I will afterwards show that ex-

penditure on mere necessities may be productive, whereas expenditure on superfluities and luxuries must be unproductive.

We may also see what is *income*, a word the meaning of which has been disputed. In ordinary language, income I think is that part of a man's means which he may annually spend, without being poorer at the end of the year than he was at the beginning. But we may define it more exactly as that stock which a man may use as self-maintenance without lessening his capital or principal. You begin with a capital of £5,000: in the course of a year you apply £500 as self-maintenance: at the end of the year you still find yourself with £5,000 of capital: your annual income has been £500.

## VI.

THERE is an apparent exception to the rule I have laid down: it will be thought that the consumption of the working man is a consumption of capital. Out of your 100 sovereigns you pay one to a smith for work done: that sovereign is part of your capital, and the smith buys food and clothes with it; that is he consumes capital.

The sovereign in your hands was capital, no doubt: the question is what it is in the smith's hands. Observe that the smith does not necessarily consume it: he may do what is commonly done by workmen, apply it to carrying on a little business at home; he may buy twine and toys to sell to children: that is he may use it as capital in carrying on a business. Or he may put it into a savings' bank, and then it is principal bearing interest.

But though the smith may apply this particular sovereign to carrying on a business, or may place it in a bank, he cannot do the same with all the money he receives, since he must needs live. Say that he is a bachelor and spends only 1s. a day: what character has this 1s.?

The 1s. is laid out on the mere necessities of life; on such food, clothes, and shelter as are needful to keep up the strength of the man: the 1s. buys the fuel and repairs necessary to make the machine work: the expenditure of the 1s. is essential to production: without the man the business cannot be carried on; and without the expenditure of the 1s. the man is incapable of work. The 1s. therefore is stock so employed as to help in carrying on a business.

The smith earns 27s. a week: he saves 20s. and spends 7s. Another man, too infirm or too idle to work, has an annuity of 27s. a week, and like the smith saves 20s. and spends 7s. This idle man spends his 7s. simply for the satisfaction of his desires, and as he does not labour, the expenditure of the 7s. in no wise promotes the carrying on of a business. The idle man's 7s. you will consent to call self-maintenance.

You call the smith's 7s. a week capital. Reasons may be assigned against this conclusion.

You say that you use the 7s. in maintaining a man whose labour is necessary to carrying on a business. I grant that the 7s. in your hands are capital: what do they become when they pass into the workman's hands, and he applies them to buying mere necessities? Your classification treats a work-



man as it treats a horse; it sets man and horse down as animated instruments. Now when you lay out 7s. on hay and oats for feeding a horse employed in your business, you certainly use the 7s. as capital, just as you do when you pay the man his wages. And you may say plausibly, that just as the hay and oats after they are eaten and are become part of the horse, are still your capital, so the bread and meat eaten by the workman bear the same character. But there is this difference: the hay and oats continue to be your property in the form of horseflesh; the bread and meat assimilated by the man are his and not yours. If the bread and meat about to be eaten by the man are capital at all, they are the man's capital.

Again; say that I was a southerner before the great civil war of ten years ago. I spent a dollar in supplying the necessaries of life to a slave: the corn and blanket I bought for this purpose were my capital, and in the form of human flesh they were my capital after they were consumed. But the corn and blanket were not the slave's capital, they were mine. The slave was a thing, a chattel just like a horse. Everything the slave had was mine.

A free workman is different from a horse and from a slave. He possesses property: the 7s. applied to his support are his own. What does he propose to himself in spending the 7s. on the necessaries of life? First of all he proposes to satisfy his desires for food, drink, warmth, sleep: so far he uses his 7s. as self-maintenance. Secondly he proposes to fit himself for work. And what does he propose to gain by work? Wages. Now when you and I use our money as

capital, we propose to gain, not wages but profit. The 7s. then, in the workman's hands are not capital because they are not used as a means of gaining profit. And as they are used for satisfying desires they may properly be classed as self-maintenance.

You may choose to deny this distinction : you may say that stock used for gaining further stock is the same thing whether it is in the hands of masters or of workmen. That is simply a higher generalization ; and if you think fit you may find another name applicable to both. But though you should do this, there still remains the fact that your class contains two sub-classes, viz. capital and self-maintenance, and that these two kinds are applied to produce different gains, viz. profit and wages.

If you assert that profit and wages are the same, I ask you, what then is the meaning of the common proposition, that wages and profit are antagonistic, and that the capitalist can increase his profit only at the expense of the labourer. I am not about to discuss this proposition : I only adduce it as an example of the distinction actually made between profit and wages.

You may say that in fact many workmen are capitalists, because they possess tools ; and most capitalists are workmen, because they earn income by personal superintendence of a business. No doubt this is so ; and as the rate of profit rises the workman will earn more by the use of his tools, and as the rate of wages rises the capitalist will earn more by the exercise of superintendence. Nevertheless, profit and wages are different things.

The smith then, earning 27s. a week, applies 7s. to

his weekly support, buying with 1s. a day the food and clothes and shelter necessary to maintain his health and vigour. He uses the 7s. first to satisfy his hunger and thirst and desire for warmth: secondly to fit himself for earning wages. I call this 7s. self-maintenance.

It must be conceded that if we compare the 7s. thus applied by the smith, with 7s. similarly applied by an idle annuitant, the result is different: the smith by his weekly labour adds 27s. to the value of the stock of the country, while the idle annuitant adds nothing. The smith is a productive member of society, the annuitant is an unproductive one. If it were desirable to multiply distinctions, we might call the smith's 7s. productive self-maintenance, and the annuitant's 7s. unproductive self-maintenance.

What is true of the smith is true also of the employer. You, a capitalist, cannot continue to superintend your business and thus to virtually earn salary, unless your health and vigour are kept up. A small part of your expenditure is incurred in keeping up your health and vigour. If 1s. a day suffices for the smith, 1s. a day may suffice for you. We will say then that out of your whole expenditure of £1 a day, or £10 a day, 1s. a day goes to keep up your health and vigour, and is productive self-maintenance: the 19s. a day, or £9. 19s. a day, go to the gratification of your desires, reasonable or unreasonable, and are unproductive self-maintenance.

But we must advance another step. I have assumed that you and your smith are both of you unmarried, and are therefore able to maintain yourselves in vigour on 1s. a day. Most men however,

are married and have a family. Let us say that the smith, to keep himself and his wife and his children in health and vigour, has to spend 20s. a week, and is only able to save 7s.; or in other words, that he uses 20s. as self-maintenance and 7s. as capital or principal.

The smith spends weekly 7s. on himself and 13s. on his wife and family. The 7s. are productive self-maintenance, because they are spent in maintaining a productive member of society: what shall we say of the 20s. spent in maintaining the wife and children? If there were no wives or families, the succession of labourers and artisans would cease: production would be at an end for want of hands: wives and families therefore are necessary at one remove to the production of commodities; and the 13s. a week spent by the smith on his family must be called productive self-maintenance.

I say then, that the 27s. you have in your hand ready to give to your workman, are capital: that when they are given to him they become self-maintenance, capital, or principal, according to the use he makes of them; self-maintenance if he spends them all in maintaining himself and his family, capital if he employs them in carrying on a business, principal if he deposits them in a bank.

The 27s. then, are constantly changing their character: they are capital in your hands, self-maintenance perhaps in the workman's hands, capital again in the hands of the shopkeepers, and in the hands of the wholesale dealers who receive them from the shopkeepers. This is true of mediate self-maintenance. But the bread and beer and cloth you buy



for yourself and your family (the final self-maintenance) do not again change their character : they are consumed and disappear.

## VII.

**T**HERE will still linger in the mind, the notion that what I have called self-maintenance is to a considerable extent capital. The 27s. have passed from your hands and are no longer capital to you : 7s. have passed from the smith to the shopkeepers, and the smith has got in return bread and beef wherewith to maintain his strength. The community, after the bread and beef are eaten, has less of these commodities than before, but it has instead of them a healthy and vigorous man, capable of production. Must not this man with his capacity to produce be reckoned a part of the national capital ?

Take a larger scale. Here are two countries, each containing five millions of men : in the one country four millions of the five are vigorous labourers, but in the other only three. Will not the nation with the four millions produce far more than the nation with only three millions ? Now, these vigorous labourers have been formed by an outlay of food and clothing and shelter, just as the oxen and sheep have been formed : they are productive to the nation much as the oxen and sheep are to the farmer. Must not the vigorous labourers be reckoned as part of the capital of the nation, just as the oxen and sheep are reckoned a part of the capital of the farmer ?

I reply that if the nation, represented by its Government, possessed a million of slaves, which it

maintained and employed so as to yield an income, those slaves would be national capital.

“But a million of freemen are more productive than a million of slaves ; and if the slaves are capital, the freemen are still more capital.”

By no means, I answer : the slaves are capital, the freemen are something much better than capital. The slaves are capital because they are things, chattels, employed in production : the freemen are not capital, because they are persons, not things. Free labourers possess a productive force, and the nation is enriched by that force. But there are many other productive forces : those of fertile land, a temperate climate, fisheries : will you call these also national capital ? If you do so, you use the figure of a poet or a rhetorician, not the strict language of science.

Capital is a branch of stock, stock is a branch of property. Where there is no property there is no stock, and where there is no stock there is no capital. The vigorous labourers of a nation, not being slaves, are not property, therefore not stock, therefore not capital.

Of two nations equal in numbers, in natural bodily endowments, in understanding, in strength of character, in everything but productive forces, the richer nation will be the one which has the greater productive forces. Those forces reside partly in agents, partly in instruments : that is partly in the inhabitants, partly in their possessions. One of the two nations may have such institutions and such hereditary customs, that nearly every person is a producer : the other nation may have a large leisure class and a large

literary and scientific class. The former nation will be the richer, the latter will be the more cultured.

Then as to instruments. One of the two nations may have more fertility in its land, richer coal mines, rivers more numerous and more navigable: that nation will be the richer, because with equal human capacities it has greater productive forces.

These productive forces reside in material objects, and seem to be to the nation what the steam-engine, the iron-furnace, and the stock or effects generally are to the manufacturer: therefore it appears natural to call both by the same name of capital. But I believe the generalization to be a false one.

If men and land are national capital, as some maintain, their earnings should follow the same law as the earnings of other capital. But men's earnings are wages, and do not follow the same law as profits which are the earnings of private capital: the earnings of land are rent, and do not follow the same laws as wages or profits the earnings of men and of private capital. To class labourers and land and private capital together, as constituting national capital, can only create confusion in the minds of economists and of students.

Nations are rich, other things being equal, not in proportion to national capital, but in proportion to national productive forces, residing in agents, in private capital, and in other instruments.

## VIII.

SOME economists will regard my reasoning as fallacious, because it is founded on the use of money: they are dissatisfied till they get back to a condition of society in which money is unknown, and in which therefore direct exchange takes place. No doubt the use of money does hide many of the operations of production and exchange. On the other hand to conceive a society without money, is difficult; and as the result is imaginary, it has not the completeness of our notions of a real society which is producing and buying and selling before our eyes. In arguing about fictitious society, we are never sure how production and exchange would take place.

Let us try however: let us imagine a new settler in a colony cut off from the world. Say that he has a store of corn the produce of his harvest. Instead of taking as you did, 110 sovereigns from his store, he takes 110 bushels of corn: 100 of these he applies to exchanging for wood and iron and to paying wages, in carrying on some business; 10 bushels he applies to maintaining his household. The 100 bushels he uses as capital: the 10 as self-maintenance.

Suppose now, that the settler seized with a fit of extravagance such as once possessed you, altered the apportionment of his 110 bushels, and applied 50 instead of 10 to maintaining his household, leaving only 60 instead of 100 to carry on his business. If he repeated this process weekly, at the end of 50 weeks he would have laid out on his business only



3,000 bushels instead of five thousand, and his harvest and other returns would be proportionately reduced : but he would have spent on his household 2,500 bushels instead of five hundred. During the year of extravagance, the settler would have paid for just as much labour as in previous years : he might even have employed the same men, setting them to work at his house instead of at his business. The next year however, he could employ only three-fifths as much labour, because his diminished capital would only pay that quantity. For here is the difference between capital and self-maintenance (or at least between circulating capital and circulating self-maintenance) that the capital is reproduced, the self-maintenance perishes in the using.

Going back to the farmer's original partition, of 100 bushels to his business and 10 to his household, I call the whole 110 bushels Stock or Effects (of labour) : I call the 100 applied to business, Capital ; the 10 applied to the household, Self-maintenance.

In my second Section I inquired whether this distinction between capital and self-maintenance had any importance. I tried the distinction by applying it to the common doctrine that labour is dependent upon capital for employment. Now we see that the settler in his extravagant year employed upon the support of labour just the same 110 bushels of corn that he employed in other years ; the difference being that an unusual proportion of the labour was employed at the house and a smaller proportion than usual at the business. During this year of extravagance then, self-maintenance acted just as capital acted in maintaining labour. In the following year

no doubt, the settler's circulating stock being diminished, the employment of labour would also be diminished.

Self-maintenance then, so long as it continues, gives employment to labour. The difference is that capital reproduces itself and self-maintenance does not.

But go a step further. Our settler is not a farmer but a manufacturer: his store of corn is not his own production, but has been got in exchange for his goods. These goods are linen and cotton fabrics used by other settlers and their families. There comes an unprosperous time, and the demand for these fabrics falls off. Our manufacturer's warehouse is full and his granaries are half empty. He cannot now employ his usual amount of labour. And why?

Is it because his circulating capital is lessened? By no means; it is because his circulating capital is in the wrong form: it is in fabrics instead of in corn. Wait a bit: a prosperous season follows: the settlers flock in and buy the fabrics and give corn in exchange; the granaries are full and the warehouse is empty. Now the manufacturer can employ his old quantity of labour again.

It appears therefore, that it is self-maintenance which gives motion to capital and thus sets labour to work; that without self-maintenance to replace capital, labour ceases to have employment.

I do not think it necessary to continue this Section: my object in it being only to show that whether we start with money or with commodities the same truths are apparent. In the earlier Sec-



tions I imagined a capitalist with capital in the form of money as the medium of exchange : in this Section I have imagined a capitalist with corn as the medium of exchange. I believe that the same truths are manifest on either supposition.



I conclude with definitions of some of the fundamental terms of Political Economy, to show what place Capital and Self-maintenance occupy.

PROPERTY is everything that has a saleable value.

REALTY is property of a durable kind, originally become property by appropriation : it includes land, streams, mines.

STOCK, or EFFECTS (of labour), is property originally produced by labour.:

CAPITAL is Stock or Effects used in business with a view to money profit, or set apart to be so used.

SELF-MAINTENANCE is Stock or Effects set apart to be consumed by the owner, his wife and children. When it is in the form of money it is Mediate Self-maintenance : when it is in the form of the bread, clothes &c. we actually use, it is Final Self-maintenance.

THE END.





